

Containment: A Viable Strategy for Success in the GWOT

A Monograph

by

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Abstract

CONTAINMENT: A VIABLE STRATEGY FOR SUCCESS IN THE GWOT by COL Robert J. Taylor Jr., US Army, 66 pages.

The purpose of this monograph is to investigate the nature of militant Islam in the context of a global ideological threat; to further examine the strategic concepts associated with the theory of containment developed to win the Cold War; and propose an alternative national strategy of containment to successfully execute the Global War on Terrorism (GWOT).

The first section defines the nature of the global threat of militant Islamic fundamentalism, and its goals regarding expansion and the threat to the US and the West. The defined threat was derived through research of current US national strategy documents and the declassified national intelligence assessment, recent academic publications, and released statements and publications of militant leaders such as Osama bin Laden and Ayman Zawahiri. Once defined, key similarities of this current and future threat and the Cold War threat of Soviet Communism are identified from primary documents on American policy and strategy from 1945-1950, and secondary sources associated with the strategy of containment. The critical aspect of this comparison is the analysis of regional and global aims of the threat, and intentions for expansion. This comparison is not exhaustive, but merely adequate to ensure that a counter-strategy of containment is worth pursuit. The key element is the comparison of the similarities of ideological threats across all spectrums of international power and influence.

The second section analyzes the successful Cold War strategy of containment and identifies key concepts that can be successful in the containment of militant Islam. The analysis focuses on former national programs designed to leverage the elements of power in support of containment of Soviet communism. Sources for this section are documents on American policy and strategy that originated between 1945 and 1950 that focus on containment strategy and secondary sources that analyze the concepts and doctrine of containment itself.

The third section proposes a viable strategy of containment based on George F. Kennan's Cold War containment strategy to counter militant Islam and successfully prosecute the GWOT in terms of a "long war." Some modifications for context and specifics of the threat are applied to make such a strategy most effective today. The criteria used to analyze the viability of a strategy of containment for the GWOT is founded on a definition of the theory of strategy and a common model for analyzing and evaluating strategy by breaking it into its component parts. Using Art Lykke's definition of strategy and his model, the proposed strategy of containment is evaluated to determine acceptability, feasibility, and suitability to prosecute the global war on terrorism.

Militant Islam has proven itself to be the only truly totalitarian movement in the world today, and regards itself as the only rival, and the inevitable successor to Western civilization. This form of extremism is extricable from Islam itself, but the US cannot unilaterally fix the internal problems of the Muslim world. However, the US can provide critical help while at the same time defending the American population at home. A strategy of containment modified for the current realities of the post Cold War world against a new global threat with similar tendencies is viable and worth strong consideration. A cornerstone of the strategy is weakening militant Islamists where they are in power, containing their expansion, and better encouraging vulnerable governments to resist. This approach takes advantage of strategic concepts of containment previously successful in winning a "long war." The threat of expansion of militant Islam is indeed a global threat similar to that of the global threat of Communism, and a comprehensive strategy of containment similar to that of previous successful US strategies during the Cold War provides a fundamental basis for a successful long term contemporary strategy to contain it.

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INTRODUCTION

The world changed significantly when the character of the bipolar global environment shifted as the “wall came down,” and the Cold War ended with the collapse of the Soviet Union and the defeat of the threat of Soviet communism. The American people, united in cause against the “evil empire” were the victors in that “long war,” champions of free trade, and waved the shining light of prosperity and democracy for the rest of the world to see. The American experience and the perception of Americans that the environment of the 90’s brought certain comfort in the fact that foreign policy and national security issues were a distant second for media and political attention alike.¹ Some claimed that history was over, and it was only a matter of time before the rest of the globe took full advantage of the American way of life. At the height of this sense of invulnerability, America awoke to the events of September 11, 2001.

Had the world really significantly changed? Could the United States be attacked so violently by something other than another superpower, or at least a strong state sponsored organization? The answer to the first question is of course the world is different, and possibly more dangerous than during the Cold War. However, the world may not be drastically different in terms of the fundamental threat to national security. The answer to the second question is a resounding yes. The United States was successfully attacked by a globally led and organized group, but not a superpower or even a state sponsored aggressor. The central issue regarding this new world became: How does the lone superpower on the planet deal with the only threat in modern history capable of inflicting such damage and loss of life within the United States itself, and potentially threaten weak governments worldwide? What is the nature of this threat, and what are its goals and intentions against the West and other sovereign states in the future?

The strategic threat of militant Islam and those that espouse it is similar to that strategic threat posed by Soviet communism during the Cold War. Most importantly, the threat to Western

¹ Robert J. Art, *A Grand Strategy for America*, (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 2003), xi.

values of the expansion of militant Islamic Jihad is characteristically similar to the former threat of the expansion of Soviet sponsored communism.

If communism and militant Islam are fundamentally similar in nature, then the enduring concepts of the strategy of containment developed for the Cold War and containment of Soviet Communist expansion are viable for a successful contemporary strategy to counter the threat of expansion of militant Islamic fundamentalism. If the current threat of the expansion of militant Islam is indeed a global one, then a comprehensive strategy of containment similar to that of a previous successful US strategy during the Cold War should provide a basis for a successful long term contemporary strategy to contain militant Islam. A strategy for success in what we are now calling a “long war” against a global ideological threat based on a proven winner of a similar “long war” is a national strategy of containment. This monograph proposes the viability of a proposed strategy of containment for the GWOT.

The Contemporary Threat

The threat to the US and the West represents a loosely organized, but globally unified insurgency that acts as an umbrella for radical and militant religious ideology with local, regional, and global goals to include the defeat of capitalism and eventual domination of Western ideas and governments. This radical ideology is based on literal interpretation of the Islamic faith, and a desire to institute it globally. This common religious foundation is interpreted by charismatic individuals that have been disenfranchised by governments unable to significantly improve the quality of life of those that they govern. They have gained support and continue to expand to vulnerable nations and regions around the world. Based on strict religious interpretation of the Quran and the example of the life of the Prophet Muhammed, these local and regional militant Islamic groups provide an alluring alternative to corrupt and ineffective government. Weak and ineffective governments are viewed as extensions of the West, and specifically the United States. Furthermore, those same ineffective governments are viewed as proponents in the exploitation of human and natural resources for continued US and Western modernization and prosperity, while

leaving the host nation population further alienated and humiliated. The contemporary threat offers a simple alternative to life in an increasingly complex and unipolar world led by the United States as the reigning superpower in the post Cold War environment.

The militant Islamic element emphatically pronounces that the solution is Islam. More precisely, they believe that the solution is their literal and extreme interpretation of Islam. The common theme of militant Islam's purpose is the religious and political domination of the people to establish an Islamic` form of government. Those that promote this form of Islam as the basis for the global insurgency are striving for local power and subsequent expansion to gain regional and eventually global influence specifically in conflict with the West. The situation is far from hopeless, but is not any less dire than the situation at the height of the Cold War.

It is unrealistic to expect to defeat this branch of ideology outright, particularly with a primarily military approach. The roots of this threat thrive in poverty, lack of education, absence of social services, and the slow pace of social, economic, and political reform mired in corruption. President Bush's strategy intends to "make use of every tool in our arsenal," but relies most heavily on the military element.² The *National Strategy for Combating Terrorism* further describes that "the fight involves the application of all instruments of national power and influence to kill or capture the terrorists; deny them safe haven and control of any nation; prevent them from gaining access to WMD; render potential terrorist targets less attractive by strengthening security; and cut off their sources of funding and other resources they need to operate and survive."³ This national strategy uses the military as the primary arm in this struggle against terrorism, rather than a balanced multi-lateral approach to address the roots of the threat and the environments where it grows and spreads. Militant Islam is too popular and widespread to be eradicated by the military alone.

² President George W. Bush, National Security Strategy of the United States of America, (Washington, DC, 2002): 1.

³ President George W. Bush, *National Strategy for Combating Terrorism* (Washington, DC, 2006): 7.

Muslims often accuse Western analysts of misinterpreting Islam and of ignorance about its real character. But, if these critics do not wish to see this religion associated with contemporary terrorism, then they need to be reminded that it is not Westerners who initially misunderstood and misjudged Islam, but rather terrorists themselves.⁴ Furthermore, Western attempts to refrain from further antagonizing the whole of Islam is in reality an example of not fully recognizing the root cause of this global phenomenon. What is required is not just precision and honesty in defining the enemy, but conceptual clarity in confronting it.⁵ The issue at hand is the separation of militant Islamic ideology from its source of power, the people it influences. Accomplishing this requires the application of the complete US national power toolkit, encompassing all of the elements of national power in conjunction with allies for a unified, multi-lateral global effort; diplomatic, informational, economic, and military, with primacy to the first three in a majority of the regions of the globe at risk. A more effective and attainable National Security Strategy consists of a comprehensive national approach with global application of the elements to contain militant Islam, and allow it to collapse under its own inability to address the problems of the people and societies it intends to govern.

Containment Strategy of the Cold War applicable to the GWOT

The expansion of militant Islam is fundamentally similar to the Cold War threat of the expansion of Soviet sponsored communism. Both threats were characterized by their version of ideology as the one and only global solution for man. Both espoused expansion into vulnerable areas, reformation of state governments based on ideology, and eventual overthrow of the capitalist democratic West. Both have taken advantage of defenseless populations and unstable governments. Both used propaganda to influence susceptible peoples. Both provided economic resources to insurgencies and at risk governments. Both used the threat of force, military elements

⁴ Ana Serafim. "A Cultural Phenomenon," *The Quarterly Journal* (Spring 2005): 62.

⁵ Daniel Pipes, "Who is the Enemy?," *Commentary* 113, no. 1(January 2002): 24.

or terrorist acts to influence populations and weakened governments. And, both intended to unify the globe under their respective banner.

Militant Islam has proven itself to be the only truly totalitarian movement in the world today, and regards itself as the only rival, and the inevitable successor to Western civilization.⁶ This form of extremism is extricable from Islam itself, but the US cannot unilaterally fix the internal problems of the Muslim world. However, the US can provide critical help while at the same time defending the American population at home. It is as simple, and as complex as weakening the militant side while strengthening the moderate side of Islam. A strategy of containment modified for the current realities of the post Cold War world against a new global threat with similar tendencies is viable and worth strong consideration. A cornerstone of the strategy is weakening militant Islamists where they are in power, containing their expansion, and better encouraging vulnerable governments to resist. This approach takes advantage of strategic concepts of containment previously successful in winning a long war. The threat of expansion of militant Islam is indeed a global threat similar to that of the global threat of communism, and a comprehensive strategy of containment similar to that of previous successful US strategies during the Cold War provides a fundamental basis for a successful long term contemporary strategy to contain it.

To adopt the phrasing of George Kennan in “The Sources of Soviet Conduct,” his famous 1947 article predicting the threat of Soviet communism expand and challenge liberal democracy, the “main element of any United States policy toward [militant Islam] must be that of long-term, patient but firm and vigilant containment of [its] expansive tendencies.”⁷ The goal must be to convince its adherents that the use of force against Americans is at best ineffectual and at worst counterproductive. They are entitled to their anti-American views, but they may not act on them by harming Americans. The only way to achieve this goal is by influencing those that militant

⁶ Ibid., 23.

⁷ George F. Kennan, “The Sources of Soviet Conduct,” *Foreign Affairs* 65, no.4 (Spring 1987): 861.

Islam targets. And that can only be done through a multi-lateral approach specific to each region or country at risk. It requires a toughness, determination, and perseverance of American policy and the American people that has not been seen for quite some time.⁸

Structure and Method

The purpose of this monograph is to investigate the nature of militant Islam in the context of a global ideological threat; to further examine the strategic concepts associated with the theory of containment developed to win the Cold War; and propose an alternative national strategy of containment to successfully execute the Global War on Terrorism (GWOT).

The first section defines the nature of the global threat of militant Islamic fundamentalism, and its goals regarding expansion and the threat to the US and the West. The definition of the threat was derived through research in current US national strategy documents and the declassified national intelligence assessment, in recent academic publications, and released statements and publications of militant leaders such as Osama bin Laden and Ayman Zawahiri. Once defined, key similarities of this current and future threat and the Cold War threat of Soviet communism are identified from primary documents on American policy and strategy from 1945-1950, and secondary sources associated with the strategy of containment. The critical aspect of this comparison is the analysis of regional and global aims of the threat, and intentions for expansion. This comparison is not exhaustive, but merely adequate to argue that a counter-strategy of containment is worth pursuit. The key element is the comparison of the similarities of ideological threats across all spectrums of international power and influence. The expected outcome defines militant Islamic Jihad as a global threat, and that its characteristics are fundamentally similar to the Soviet communist threat in terms of intent to eventually overthrow the US, Western ideals and dominate the world.

⁸ Pipes, 23.

The second section analyzes the successes of the Cold War strategy of containment and identifies key concepts that can be successful in the containment of militant Islam. The presentation focuses on former national programs designed to leverage the elements of power in support of containment of Soviet communism. Sources for this section are documents on American policy and strategy that originated between 1945 and 1950 that focus on containment strategy and secondary sources that analyze the concepts and doctrine of containment itself.

The third section proposes a viable strategy of containment, based on George F. Kennan's Cold War containment strategy to counter militant Islam and successfully prosecute the GWOT in terms of a war of long duration. Some modifications for context and specifics of the threat are applied to make such a strategy most effective today. The criteria used to analyze the viability of a contemporary strategy of containment were based on a common model for analyzing and evaluating strategy by breaking it into its component parts. Art Lykke's theory of strategy focuses on the nation-state and the use of the elements of power to serve national interests. In his definition, strategy is the employment of the instruments (elements) of power (political/diplomatic, economic, military, and information) to achieve the political objectives of the state in cooperation or in competition with other actors pursuing their own objectives.⁹ Using his definition and model, the proposed strategy of containment is evaluated to determine acceptability, feasibility, and suitability to prosecute the global war on terrorism.

THE GLOBAL THREAT OF MILITANT ISLAM

The enemy of Western society, and specifically the United States, is a mutating and ideologically driven global threat engendered by a stateless, adaptive, complex and polymorphous host.¹⁰ As early as February 1995, North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) Secretary General Welly Claes declared that since the end of the Cold War, "Islamic militancy has emerged as

⁹ Richard H. Yarger. "Towards A Theory of Strategy: Art Lykke and the Army War College Strategy Model." (<http://dde.carlisle.army.mil/authors/stratpap.htm>, last accessed on 23 October, 2006): 1.

¹⁰ Robert M. Cassidy. *Counterinsurgency and the Global War on Terror: Military Culture and Irregular War*, (Westport, CT: Prager Publishers, 2006), 3.

perhaps the single gravest threat to the NATO Alliance and to Western security.” Indeed, Claes said that not only did militant Islam pose the same kind of threat to the West as communism before it but, the scale of the danger was greater, for militant Islam encompassed elements of “terrorism, religious fanaticism, and the exploitation of social and economic injustice.”¹¹

Furthermore, militant Islam is the self-declared enemy of the US. It has proved itself to be the only truly totalitarian movement in the world today, and regards itself as the only rival and inevitable successor to Western civilization.¹² It is a serious threat, primarily due to its ideological fervency, its reach, its ambition, and its staying power. Islam itself, a divinely based system of belief and values is incompatible with the absolute secularism of Western liberal ideology, claims to be the only repository of truth and to have universal validity.¹³ However, militant Islam takes this idea to the extreme, acting on the literal foundation of the religion in ways designed to physically eliminate all obstructions to Islamic ascendancy. The enemy is militant Islamic fundamentalism.

According to Bernard Lewis, “Most Muslims are not fundamentalists, most fundamentalists are not terrorists, but nearly all terrorists are Muslim fundamentalists.”¹⁴ This statement illustrates how simple yet complex identifying this enemy and the ideology behind it really is. The most prolific global insurgent leaders are Muslim, and they are hijacking Islam for their purposes. Osama bin Laden and his al-Qaeda (AQ) followers may not represent the whole of Islam, and many of their statements and actions directly contradict more moderate interpretations of Islamic principles and teachings, but the message does resonate within the Arab Muslim civilization. They, like other ideological based threats of the past, must be viewed in their own cultural, religious, and historical context.

¹¹ Pipes, 22.

¹² Ibid., 23.

¹³ Shireen T. Hunter. *The Future of Islam and the West*, The Center for Strategic and International Studies (Westport, CT: Praeger Publishers, 1998), 74.

¹⁴ Bernard Lewis. *The Crisis of Islam*, (New York: The Modern Library, 2003), 162.

The Muslim world is in a struggle with itself to determine its true identity, and with the West to determine its role in the world. Internally, the battle is between the moderate and progressive realists with a view toward inclusion within the global society while maintaining religious autonomy. This is in conflict with militant Islamists view of a unified Muslim return to greatness and spiritual authenticity. Externally, militant Islam is determined to continue the struggle against non-believers at all costs. It is committed to replacing the current world order with a global Islamic state, and it has gained momentum.¹⁵

This current threat is an insurgency, a popular movement that seeks to change the status quo. The insurgency is global, and thoroughly networked as a result of modern technology. It is ideologically driven, fundamentalist and extremist. This class of insurgents has local, regional, and global aims. It is a network based in ideology, and supported by financiers, transportation experts, propagandists, operations experts, and others. Their struggle is a confederation of movements exploited and linked through regional and global extremist organizations. They “think globally and act locally.”¹⁶

The constituency and composition of militant Islam is divisible into three main elements. The first is the inner core, made up of the likes of Osama bin Laden, and the other leaders of AQ and its protégés of the network of violent terrorist groups inspired by militant Islamic Jihadist ideology. The second ring comprises a much larger population of militants who are sympathetic to AQ’s radical Muslim utopian vision. This element constitutes some 10-15 percent of the total Muslim world population of roughly one billion world-wide. The third group consists of Muslims who do not accept the militant Islamic program in all its particulars, but do concur with its rank anti-Americanism. This is the silent majority, acting as passive participants in the insurgency. Estimates of Muslim opinions worldwide do not exist, but Daniel Pipes senses that one half of the

¹⁵ Zeyno Baran. “Fighting the War of Ideas,” *Foreign Affairs* 84, no. 6 (Nov-Dec 2005): 63.

¹⁶ Kent Hughes Butts and Jeffery C. Reynolds, eds. “The Struggle Against Extremist Ideology,” *Center for Strategic Leadership*, a compilation of informed presentations, discussions and workshop recommendations of participants at the *Addressing the Conditions that Foster Terrorism Symposium*, June 8-10, 2005, 21-22.

world's Muslims, some 500 million, sympathize more with Osama bin Laden than with the United States.¹⁷

The Foundation of Militant Islamic Ideology

Ideology can be defined as a set or system of beliefs held by a group; a comprehensive set of political, economic, and social views or ideas, particularly concerned with the form and role of government. This set of views is especially concerned with sociopolitical goals and methods to attain them. In some cases, ideology can be so strongly held by their adherents that they ignore evidence against their beliefs and they fall into error.¹⁸ This is the case of militant Islam and its adherent's methods to attain their goals.

Religion, like the universalist concepts of the last two centuries, is an ideology, and Islam represents the most extreme when it comes to how people should live. Islam is a communal religion in structure, and it presents an all encompassing and internally cohesive set of rules, both legal and ethical, for the organization of collective and individual life. Group psychology, economics, leadership, power distribution, and external and internal issues of resource distribution all have a direct effect on Islamic religious interpretation.¹⁹ Islam can be interpreted as a complete way of life, a basis for diplomacy, information, military engagement, and economic well being. In this sense it can be the foundation of government and society at large, an ideology well within the terms of the definition above.

Militant Islamic ideology is both a guide to action and a justification for action already decided upon. It recognizes no boundaries between private and public domains, and attempts to regulate the totality of individual and collective life. It is a totalitarian, anti-Western and anti-democratic creed. It is backward looking and intolerant, which makes it fear Western ideas and

¹⁷ Pipes, 23-24.

¹⁸ Two definitions of ideology from the world wide web are found at http://www.dict.org/bin/Dict?Form=Dict1&Strategy=*&Database=*&Query=ideology, and at http://www.imuna.org/c2c/app_a.html, last accessed on 28 December 2006.

¹⁹ Hunter, ix-11.

influence. It opposes Western presence in Muslim lands and challenges the West's global supremacy. The militant Islamic elements that preach this are the nemesis of Western civilization.²⁰

Militant Islam's use of history and religion for relevance and as guideposts for action establishes a compelling foundation for the extreme interpretation of Islam attractive to many Muslims. Two sources of influence guide ideological, political and social conduct of militant Islamic movements: First, a universalized interpretation and vision of militant Islam as an ideology engaged in a final struggle against non-believers; Second, exclusionist tendencies within countries where Islam is practiced.²¹

The main inspiration for today's Sunni militant Islamic ideology comes from a medieval theologian named Ibn Taymiyyah, whose works are quoted in virtually every militant Islamic statement to this very day. His fundamentalist approach to Islam, and call for armed resistance to mid-thirteenth century Mongol invasions of the Near East remain the groundwork for contemporary Muslim radicals. Following Ibn Taymiyyah, Sayed Qutb, Sayed ala Maududi and Mohammad 'Abdus Salam Faraj are the leading radical Islamic interpreters of the twentieth century. All have seized on the concept of Jihad, with a strict interpretation of it as violence and intolerance. Qutb's message is the eternal call to violent Jihad in the cause of God, while Maududi expressed it as an offensive, imperialistic and expansive concept for a world revolution. Faraj goes further, imploring all Muslims to act on their absent Islamic obligation of Jihad against all non-believers, using all previous radical interpretations of Islam as fodder to incite violence.²²

The Islamic religious obligation of Jihad set forth and articulated by militant Islamic groups is drawn from the ideological world-view of these contemporary interpreters of the militant strand of Islam. Their goal of Jihad as the sixth pillar of Islam is the creation of an

²⁰ Ibid., 14-15.

²¹ Guy Sands-Pignot. "The Sources of Radical Islamic Conduct: Understanding and Neutralizing a Transnational Ideological Threat," *US Army War College Strategy and Research Project* (US Army War College, Carlisle Barracks, PA: 7 April 2003), vii.

Islamic state, the eradication of Western law, and the imposition of Islamic law. They believe that radical change is required; and power must be seized by the caliphate.²³ Their success in spreading this interpretation has resulted in the widespread circulation of their writings through universities, where a large number of students major in Islamic studies, and through Muslim clerics.²⁴ In this way they have successfully influenced the next generation of leadership and the masses simultaneously. These past interpreters of Islam provide the foundation for Osama bin Laden and Ayman al-Zawahiri to push even further toward violent conflict with the West using their versions of Islamic Jihad, most notably bin Laden's "Jihad against Jews and Crusaders," and Zawahiri's "Knights Under the Prophet's Banner."²⁵

Militant Islam's modern justification for violence is rationalized under a veil of religious survival. Those justifications include: cultural existence and revival; fundamental Muslim views of Jihad and military engagement; self-defense of dignity, pride, and physical well-being; protest against injustice; and rationalization of expansion of religious politics into non-Muslim regions.²⁶ Radical Muslims view Jihad as a rational justification to topple their countries' corrupt and illegitimate regimes, which they also conceive of as Western lackeys. They argue that Jihad is sanctioned by God, and consider it the only course to resurrect the Islamic state.²⁷

The current strain of militant Islamic Jihad is squarely based on the Koran and its virulent interpretation. It is the result of the meeting of Wahabbi social and cultural conservatism, and Qutbist political radicalism. The convergence of Wahabbi and Qutbist political trends with modern movements of fundamental Islamists has resulted in an ideology with emphasis on Jihad,

²² John L. Esposito. *The Islamic Threat: Myth or Reality*, (New York, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), 143.

²³ Ibid., 143.

²⁴ Mark Jurgensmeyer. *Terror in the Mind of God*, (Berkeley and Los Angeles, CA: University of California Press, 2000), 79-83.

²⁵ Walter Laqueur. *Voices of Terror: Manifestos, Writings and Manuals of Al Qaeda, Hamas, and Other Terrorists from Around the World and Throughout the Ages*, (New York: Reed Press, 2004), 391-426.

²⁶ Jurgensmeyer, 79-83.

²⁷ Hilal Khashan. "The New World Order and the Tempo of Militant Islam," *British Journal of Middle eastern Studies*, 24, no. 1 (May 1997): 12-13.

which is interpreted only in its most violent and fanatical sense. Osama bin Laden, the Wahabbist, plus Ayman al-Zawahiri, the Qutbist combined in the crucible of the Afghanistan war with the Soviet Union represents this convergence. This meeting produced the militant variety of political Islam represented by AQ.²⁸ Jihad is the central concept of their doctrine and it has two components. Defensive Jihad for the general mobilization for the Islamic homeland defense against attack and occupation by the infidels, with infidels interpreted strictly as those that don't conform to their strict version of Islam, which includes many Muslims. And offensive Jihad, which provides a religious cover for the militant expansion of the Islamic world to conquest and then exploit the land of the non-believers.²⁹ Terrorism is the main tactic of this movement, and Osama bin Laden the supreme icon.

The Sources of the Militant Islamic Movement

The underlying but largely unspoken and unacknowledged cause of the dichotomy between Islam and the West is the question of power and the consequence of its exercise and influence at the regional and global levels. The global balance of power is heavily weighted in the West's favor, and gives the West tremendous influence over the fate of Muslim states and peoples. This includes support for regimes and governments that are less than reasonably supported by a majority of their own population. Three factors are central to the global appearance of this resilient militant Islamist phenomena and its recent expansion: polarization of Muslim societies along economic lines; marginalization of the traditional and culturally Muslim elements of society; discrimination against traditional Muslims in their quest for power.³⁰

The history of the glory of the Arab world established under the Prophet Mohammed, and the more recent history of the decline of the Arab world since the break up of the Ottoman Empire together provide a back drop for the basic psyche of the people. Coupled with the

²⁸ Mohammed Ayoob. "Political Islam," *World Policy Journal* 21, no. 3 (Fall, 2004): 4.

²⁹ Gilles Kepel and Peter Clark. "The Origins and Development of the Jihadist Movement: From Anti-Communism to Terrorism," *Asian Affairs* 34, no. 2 (July 2003): 92-115.

perception of themselves as victims of their own government and of the West, and as an under-class of society directly affects their individual and cultural self-esteem. This has led to the desire by those of little hope to cling to a form of their religion and justify striking those that they perceive to have put them in this situation.³¹ In their view, fault lies with the West: the tyrannical colonial governments established by the West; Western economic exploitation and military occupation of their lands; bombardment by heretical Western media; and the ascendancy of non-believers as global leaders. From a world-wide perspective, militant Islamic religious belief provides a common connection in pinpointing the West as the common enemy of Islam.

The underlying factors fueling the spread of the militant Islamic or Jihadist movement are a whole of government failure. This failure can be blamed on Western influence, at least partially if not completely. The legacy of colonial rule and foreign domination heavily influenced the early and existing corrupt governments of the region. Furthermore, the failure of the international development process to correct poor governance exacerbates an already charged situation. Economically, the exploitation of Arab oil for the industrialized West produced greater division and dichotomy between the region's rich and the poor, producing an ever increasing population in poverty, and little incentive for the elites to reform government. International economic pressure on the Middle East for economic reform has been virtually non-existent. Western and specifically the US support of Israel in the Arab-Israeli conflict further enflamed militant views that the source of conflict was also religious. This and other events over the last few decades pushed a harsh reality smack into the face of the Arab-Islamic world of just how far behind they were, adding fuel to the sparks that have since flared across the Middle East.³² Discredited regimes, economic decline, and a series of regional events resulted in a call for an Islamic alternative

³⁰ Hunter, 69-70.

³¹ Cassidy, 5.

³² John Esposito. "Political Islam," *Joint Force Quarterly* (Spring 2000): 50. Those events include the Arab-Israeli or Six Day War (1967), Pakistani-Bangladesh Civil War (1971-72), Lebanese Civil War (1975-90), Iranian Revolution (1978-79), and the ongoing Arab-Israeli Conflict

reflected in slogans such as, “Islam is the solution.” The root causes of this resurgence are political, socioeconomic, religious, and cultural.

Entrenched grievances to include alienation from the political system, widespread governmental and economic corruption, injustice in the eyes of the common man, and fear of further Western domination are basic factors that have led to anger, humiliation, and a sense of powerlessness to effect change in individual and collective lives. The tyrants and dictators who long ruled the Arab world have proven unable to implement changes required to reverse the trends of collapse in their countries. Unable to reverse economic and societal ills, and unresponsive to the mass of the Arab population, these rulers instituted policies of strong internal oppression, which further closed off Arab society from the adoption of new ideas and methods. Populations that were unable to politically influence their governments found that some methods of expression were still allowed within the context of religion, Islam. Working under this framework militants found that they could shelter their activities within a religious structure, while at the same time they realized that they were gaining popular strength to grasp for power.³³

Access to global media further aggravates Muslim aspirations with envy of Western modernization. Restoration of dignity in the light of Western humiliation finds a common sympathetic chord to the large majority of Muslims, whether they are militant or not.³⁴ The public’s ever rising expectations for a better quality of life, while simultaneously living under conditions of reduced resources and an ever increasing population constrains opportunities and hope to ever rise above the downward spiral. The rising population of unemployed youth with an education based in militant Islamic ideology has become the vehicle for militant Islam to carry forward its pledge for world domination.³⁵ Support for militant Islam is a function of its perceived ability to provide for tangible and intangible needs of the people not met by the existing system. Militant Islam effectively exploits a pervasive anti-US sentiment among most Muslims

³³ James G. Lacey. “The Impending Collapse of Arab Civilization,” *US Naval Institute Proceedings* 131, no. 9 (Sep 2005): 11.

³⁴ Ayoob, 11.

using the US presence and ongoing conflict in Iraq, and the historical reality of the slow pace of real and sustained economic, social, and political reforms in most Muslim majority nations to garner support and maintain momentum.³⁶

It is the disillusionment with American foreign policy in the context of past humiliations, and the current sense of powerlessness that makes resistance to Western domination come alive in the Muslim political imagination. In this climate of despair and impotence extremists find willing recruits for their terrorist plots. Extremist groups, which appropriate the right to speak in the name of Islam, justify terrorism as the only way to overcome the asymmetry in power between “Muslims” and the “West.” By promoting terrorism under a perverted and extreme definition of “Jihad,” these groups succeed in establishing militant Islamic Jihad as a monolithic vision, and supremely dangerous to the future of the West.³⁷

Goals of Militant Islamic Fundamentalism

Palestinian Islamist Abdullah Usuf Azzam, the mentor of Osama bin Laden and former member of Hamas, iterated the fervor and objective of militant Islamic fundamentalism practiced by AQ in the following quotes: “Allah is its goal, the Prophet its ideal, the Quran its constitution, Jihad its way, and death in the service of Allah its aspiration; honor and respect can not be established except on a foundation of corpses;” and “glory does not build its lofty edifice except with skulls.”³⁸ These statements provide a clear view of militant Islam’s intended method to achieve their goals. The ends are a new global order, led by a single Islamic caliph; the ways that militant Islam intends to prosecute their campaign is through violence or terrorism; and the

³⁵ Hunter, 99-115.

³⁶ Declassified Key Judgements of the National Intelligence Estimate. “Trends in Global Terrorism: Implications for the United States.” Found at http://www.dni.gov/press_releases/Declassified_NIE_Key_Judgments.pdf 16 April 2006, last accessed on 26 October 2006, 2007.

³⁷ Ayoub, 11. Also, monolithic is defined in the Free Online Dictionary as “characterized by massiveness and rigidity and total uniformity; such as a monolithic society, or a monolithic worldwide movement.” This accurately defines the intent of militant Islamic Jihad ideology. Found at <http://www.thefreedictionary.com/monolithic>, last accessed on 6 January 2007.

³⁸ Anne Marie Oliver and Paul F. Steinberg. *The Road to Martyrs’ Square*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 2002), xxi.

means, using the unified Muslim Ummah to achieve their goals. The Muslim Ummah represents the entire world population of Islamic followers.³⁹

Militant Islamic goals are very clear: Unify the Muslim Ummah while refusing to recognize any type of secular state within the Muslim world; Establishment of a single caliphate to rule over the Muslim Ummah; Rejection of US or Western hegemony in international politics to include uncompromising opposition to Israel.⁴⁰ Shortly after 9/11, Ayman al-Zawahiri issued a strategy paper that called for the re-creation of the Muslim Caliphate that existed from the time of Mohammed until the collapse of the Ottoman Empire in 1924. The strategy was designed to regain complete and utter control over every aspect of Muslim life.⁴¹ The strategy illustrates that the only way forward is to reestablish Islamic society exemplified by the Prophet Mohammed; to liberate Muslims from thoughts, systems, and laws of non-believers; and replace the Judeo-Christian dominated nation-state system with a borderless Ummah ruled by a new caliph.⁴²

The unofficial leader of Sunni militant Islamic Jihad is AQ and Osama bin Laden. He intends to rally Muslims to the cause of Jihad in order to drive the US and its influence out of the Islamic world and restore the Islamic empire of the Middle Ages.⁴³ His overarching aim to supplant the secular state system with a medieval caliphate system is based on his extreme interpretation of Islam.⁴⁴ His message has seized on symbols of Islam's past greatness while he promises to restore pride to people who consider themselves the victims of successive foreign masters. He has used cultural and religious allusions to the holy Quran and its most virulent interpreters. He has appealed to people disoriented by cyclonic change as they confront modernity

³⁹ The Free Dictionary by Farlex found at <http://www.thefreedictionary.com/ummah>, Ummah is defined as the Muslim community or people, considered to extend from Mauritania to Pakistan. Last accessed on April 4, 2007.

⁴⁰ Zachary Karabell. "Fundamental Misconceptions: Islamic Foreign Policy," *Foreign Policy* 105 (Winter 1996-1997): 82-83.

⁴¹ Butts and Reynolds, eds., 23.

⁴² Zeyno Baran. "Fighting the War of Ideas," *Foreign Affairs* 84, no. 6 (Nov-Dec 2005): 69.

⁴³ Tony Karon. "Why Al-Qaeda Thrives," *Time* (26 May 2004), found at <http://www.time.com/world/article/0,8599,642825,00.html>, last accessed on 9 October 2006.

⁴⁴ Cassidy, 5.

and globalization. His rhetoric has selectively drawn from multiple sources; Islam, history, and the region's political and economic malaise.

Osama bin Laden has attained a considerable mass of fans in the Muslim world. A large percentage see him as a hero, and millions of non-Muslims do not outwardly argue with his actions, not because they like him, but because they dislike their situation and perceived US policies in the region.⁴⁵ His organization, AQ, has promised to become the general headquarters to affect Islam's return to greatness through international terrorism by providing funds, training, weapons, planning, directing, and executing actions to support its monolithic vision.⁴⁶ In Osama bin Laden, the Jihadist world found a leader that would challenge the West, and thus fill a vacuum of opposition to US world leadership.

Tendencies for Expansion of Militant Islam

The greatest threat to the homeland and US interests is AQ and the expansion of the global Jihadist movement. This phenomenon is currently spreading and adapting to the changing global security environment. Militant Islam is increasing in numbers and geographic dispersion. The movement remains decentralized, but has a confluence of shared purpose, anti-Americanism.⁴⁷

The Islamic world view and concept of the nature of interstate relations is polarized and expansionist. The three main concepts for expansion of militant Islamic Jihad are synonymous with their goals; the unification of the Ummah, Dar al-Islam (House of Islam) versus Dar al-Harb (House of War) coupled with the interpretation of Jihad, and the great caliphate.⁴⁸ Uniting the global Muslim Ummah is the first expansionist concept and requires the fusing of the world-wide

⁴⁵ Usamah bin-Laden. "Main Columns of the Osama bin-Laden Ideology," trans. Gulcin Yatin (*Journal of Turkish Weekly*, 4 August 2005), 1-2. Found at <http://www.usak.org.uk/junction.asp?mod=articles&st=PrintArticleDetail&id=122&1m=5>, last accessed on 4 April 2007.

⁴⁶ United States Government. "The Foundation of the New Terrorism," *National Commission on Terrorist Attacks Upon the United States* (20 September 2004). Found at http://www.9-11commission.gov/report/911report_ch2.htm, last accessed on 1 November 2006.

⁴⁷ Declassified Key Judgements of the National Intelligence Estimate, 1.

⁴⁸ Serafirm, 64.

community of Muslims, the community of believers. The Ummah rhetorically transcends race, ethnicity, nationality and class. Moreover, it is believed that all of humanity was at one time Ummah, a united group until they fell into division and disobedience. In this context, all humans were Muslim, and will be united as Muslims in the future. The second expansionist dimension derives from Islam's view of the world as divided into the House of Islam and the House of War. The House of War specifically refers to non-believers, and is the enemy of Islam and of Muslims. Under this concept, Muslims are required to wage Jihad until the House of War is transformed into the House of Islam.⁴⁹ The quest represents the foundation for militant Islam's expansionist trends. The fusion of the Ummah into a transnational entity designed to wage war with non-Muslims until all have been incorporated into the House of Islam under a single ruler (the caliph) is the basis for their global ambition. The militant version of Islamic Jihad in search of power through religion, politics and the global connectivity of the information age has enabled the expansionist impulse of militant Islamic leaders. Once humanity is united and society transformed, the great caliphate will rule over the globe as a single Islamic state.

Militant Islamic fundamentalism has already become a significant force in much of the Islamic world.⁵⁰ Furthermore, the expansion of militant Islam has already developed a series of new strongholds. Terrorists and global insurgents of the twenty-first century are incubating today in Asia, Africa, South America, and parts of Europe.⁵¹ The Southeast Asian country of Indonesia is 88 percent Muslim, and hosts Islamist efforts to impose Islamic law (Shari'a) through both legal and violent means. Muslim-Christian clashes in this country have killed more than 19,000 people since 1999, and have left over 600,000 people displaced. In Bangladesh, 83 percent of the population is Muslim, and Islamists aspire to establish a true "Islamic Republic of Bangladesh," with a constitution based on the Shari'a. The goal, says the head of one group, is to "pursue a slow but steady policy towards Islamization of the country." And in Nigeria, where only 50

⁴⁹ Hunter, 59-60.

⁵⁰ Masoud Kazemzadeh. "Teaching the Politics of Islamic Fundamentalism," *Political Science and Politics* 31, no. 1 (March 1998): 52.

percent of the population is Muslim, Islamists have announced plans to adopt versions of Islamic law in at least 12 of 36 states since 1999.⁵² Here, militant Islamists are disregarding the Nigerian constitution that stipulates a separation of church and state, and the demographic realities of a large percentage of the population being non-Muslim. That militant Islam and its companion violence have spread from the Middle Eastern core to the periphery of the Muslim world is of great concern. Western civilization and this element of Islam are mutually exclusive systems vying for ideological dominance.⁵³ This implies that the current war will likely be longer, bloodier, and more demanding than most people imagine.

The Reality of the Global Threat of Militant Islam

The declaration of war against the United States by Osama bin Laden and the World Islamic Front represents a resumption of the struggle for religious dominance of the world that began in the 7th century by the Muslim masses. For him and his followers, this is a moment of opportunity. Today, America exemplifies the civilization and embodies the leadership of the House of War, ready to be overthrown. The fatwa issued by bin Laden and Zawahiri explicitly directs the killing of Americans and their allies, both civilian and military. It says that “it is the duty of every Muslim in any country to kill Americans and their allies, in which it is possible.”⁵⁴

Osama bin Laden’s movement has morphed and is now a loose and expanding association of like minded Jihadists in terror cells linked less by chains of command than by a common ideological vision. There are state and local level terrorist organizations, regional terrorist groups, and terrorists with global reach. These groups are linked both through direct cooperation and asset sharing, and indirectly through ideology and common cause. The state and regional threats are not new, but the global threat, grown out of these smaller more localized

⁵¹ Cassidy, 1.

⁵² Daniel Pipes and Jonathon Schanzer. “Militant Islam’s New Stronghold,” *Human Events* 58, no. 42 (11 November 2002): 1-2.

⁵³ Baran, 69.

⁵⁴ Usamah bin-Laden, “Main Columns of the Osame bin-Laden Ideology,” 1.

threats is what has changed and has become the visionary for all those executing the actions of militant Islam.⁵⁵ The enemy has a powerful component, a “virtual caliphate” guided by an extremist ideology fueled with a venomous strain of Islamic Jihad. The center of gravity, the decisive terrain of this war, is the vast majority of people not directly involved but whose support, willing or coerced, is necessary to insurgent operations around the world.⁵⁶ The growing embrace of the movement’s goals and tactics with direct and indirect connection to bin Laden’s network means that a serious threat will remain for the foreseeable future, with or without AQ physically in the picture.⁵⁷ If AQ and bin Laden can actually persuade the world of Islam to accept their views and leadership while simultaneously harnessing the Muslim population there is surely a long struggle ahead.

The ability of AQ to seize the decisive terrain, the Muslim population, is based on their holistic approach combined with the population’s perception that no other viable alternatives exist. AQ simultaneously influences the population and pressures unstable and divided governments at the local and state level through clerical and political ties. They often support those same government’s attempts to maintain or gain power through all forms of action and rhetoric with the eventual control of that local or state through the government in power. This is accomplished through bin Laden’s International Islamic Front designed to gain further support of AQ’s global anti-American project. AQ provides material support to local and regional revolutionary Islamic militants with weapons and money. The propaganda and information campaign has been invaluable to AQ’s movement. Name recognition provides indispensable prestige to recruitment in home countries by local militant Islamist groups. AQ provides military and militant Islamic religious training of recruits, further solidifying commitment to the Jihadist’s vision and agenda. The most important element of influence by AQ may be a seductive solution

⁵⁵ Cheryl Smart. “From Containment to Combating Terrorism: The Evolution and Application of a Post Cold War Strategy,” *USAWC Strategy Research Paper*, US Army War College, Carlisle, PA (18 March 2005): 5-6.

⁵⁶ Butts and Reynolds, eds., 21-22.

to common grievances against a perceived evil and monstrous threat, the US and the West. AQ's spokesmen never miss an opportunity to remind the world that Islam and the West are locked in an ongoing battle dating back to the early days of Islam, which today is the product of a Judeo-Christian conspiracy.⁵⁸ Violence restores dignity and pride in the face of the new world order and of Muslim humiliation in being left behind. It also provides a common reason for the Muslim predicament that resonates with the masses by identifying the West as the historical enemy of Islam through interpreted scriptural evidence.⁵⁹

The militant Islamic movement continues to expand and spread, particularly among the youth. The enemy is waging a global insurgency that spans more than 60 countries and six continents. The operating environment covers developed Europe to the most underdeveloped parts of the world, and ranges from dense urban areas and mega-cities, to mountains, deserts and jungles. It encompasses permissive, semi-permissive, and non-permissive environments where the overwhelming majority are states with which we are not at war but are hostile or denied areas.⁶⁰ The militant Islamic movement has gained the offensive against the perceived enemies of Islam. The movement has strengthened its roots of dedication through sacrifice, and sustained its role as the main threat to the security of secular governments. The Jihadist movement has become an international alliance, and that alliance continues the battle today. It has largely succeeded in clarifying the main elements of its ideology. Most importantly, the movement continues to gain momentum toward its ultimate goals, which have no specific date for accomplishment. In their view, patience and perseverance will eventually succeed in the establishment of a Muslim state and the restoration of the caliphate.⁶¹ Islam's virulent strain of militant Islamic Jihad is a violent,

⁵⁷ Tony Karon. "Why the Qaeda Threat is Growing," *Time* (17 March 2004), found at <http://www.time.com/time/world/article/0,8599,601981,00.html>, last accessed on 9 October 2006.

⁵⁸ Esposito, *The Islamic Threat: Myth or Reality*, 19.

⁵⁹ Jessica Stern. *Terror in the Name of God*, (New York: Harper Collins Books, 2003), 250-269.

⁶⁰ Michael Vickers. "Radical Islamic Threat," FDCH Congressional Testimony, Center for Strategic and Budgetary Assessments (26 October 2005): 6.

⁶¹ Ayman al-Zawahiri. "Extracts from Al-Jihad Leader Al-Zawahiri's New Book," *Al Sharq Al-Awsat Extracts from Knights Under the Prophets Banner* (2 December 2001), 38-39.

totalitarian ideology dedicated to the destruction of Western secularism in general, and the US in particular. This strain is not a small minority, nor a lunatic fringe.

Militant Islamic fundamentalism is a new form of monolithic threat.⁶² It is a fundamentalist coalition that continues to operate and reform under a single ideology, made up of Jihadist movements in various parts of the globe. It represents a growing power that is rallying under the banner of Jihad while operating within the boundaries but outside the scope of the nation-state and the new world order. It promises destruction and ruin for the non-believers. There is an expectation of loyalty to a single leadership element, self-declared to represent the Muslim people. The Jihad movement is based on unity before a single enemy composed of those that do not share in their vision of the world. The message of the Jihad movement is intended for the masses, and directs liberation through aggression by Muslim peoples. Confronting the enemies of Islam and launching Jihad against those enemies requires an overarching authority, one that raises the singular banner of Jihad to rally Muslims around it.⁶³

The war which America finds itself in is a conflict against a collectivist and universalist ideology that makes use of religion as a means to attain and maintain power.⁶⁴ The situation is grim, but it is not hopeless; not any more than the situation at the height of the Cold War with the Soviet Union was hopeless. What is required now, as then, is not just precision and honesty in defining the enemy, but conceptual clarity in confronting it.⁶⁵ The threat must be taken as seriously as or more so than communism during the Cold War. Just like the Soviets, the fundamentalists see the battle as a trial of strength. They think they are winning, because the mere requirement to endure is seen as battles of victory on the road to achieving larger goals. The conflict has become international. Militant Islam and specifically AQ and Ayman al-Zawahiri have identified the United States and Western multi-faceted international instruments as the main

⁶² One of three definitions of monolithic in The Free Dictionary by Farlex online, defines monolithic as, "Constituting or acting as a single, often rigid, uniform whole: a monolithic worldwide movement." Found at <http://www.thefreedictionary.com/monolithic>, last accessed on 4 April 2007.

⁶³ al-Zawahiri, 79-81.

⁶⁴ Sands-Pignot, 26.

enemy: the United Nations; the apostate rulers of Islamic peoples; multinational corporations; international communication networks; international news agencies and media networks; and international relief agencies.⁶⁶

The enemy's sources of power revolve around the ability to influence vulnerable populations. It is an ideology derived from an extreme interpretation of Islam focused on the violent, offensive, and expansive concept of Jihad. The enemy takes advantage of unstable governments with Muslim populations to gain local power and institute Islamic law. The enemy has found willing support and sanctuary among many portions of the world-wide Muslim masses. The enemy uses effective propaganda through global communications technology to recruit new adherents, fund operations, and to influence the impoverished, oppressed, and discontented. The enemy effectively uses terrorism to glorify Jihad and influence governments, both unstable and stable Western governments. The enemy is militant Islamic Jihad.

CONTAINMENT STRATEGY

To address a strategy of containment for this paper, three seminal documents set the foundation. The first two established the framework for understanding US Foreign policy that emerged in 1946, known as the "Long Telegram," and a subsequent *Foreign Affairs* article under the title of "The Sources of Soviet Conduct," written by George F. Kennan. The third was NSC 20/4, also primarily authored by Kennan, which was approved by President Truman in 1948. These documents are the basis for over 40 years of an evolving policy of containment leading to the successful collapse of the Soviet Union and decline of Soviet sponsored communism.

Historically, containment refers to the foreign policy strategy of the United States following World War II and into the Cold War in which it attempted to stop the expansion of nations moving politically towards Soviet Union-based communism, rather than the European-

⁶⁵ Pipes, 24.

⁶⁶ Nimrod Raphaeli. *Ayman Muhammed Rabi al-Zawahiri*, (Jewish Virtual Library, 11 March 2003), 12-13. Found at <http://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/jsource/biography/Zawahiri.html>, last accessed on 1 November 2006.

American-based democracy and capitalism. George F. Kennan coined the term in July 1947, when he called publicly for a “long-term, patient but firm and vigilant containment of Russian expansive tendencies.”⁶⁷ The policy was first described in Kennan’s famous long telegram. He argued that the primary goal of the United States should be to prevent the spread of communism to non-communist nations; that is to “contain” communism within its borders. This led to American support for regimes around the world to block the spread of communism. The thesis of Kennan’s long telegram was nothing less than the whole basis of American policy toward the Soviet Union until the end of the Cold War. A key part of his proposal was that there could be no permanent resolution of differences with Soviet leaders which relied on the fiction of external threat to maintain internal legitimacy. Furthermore, Kennan emphasized that a successful strategy required patience and firmness. Patience because the conflict is about ideas that cannot be changed instantly, and firm because there can be no compromise of values in the application of foreign policy. The *Sources of Soviet Conduct*, otherwise known as the *X Article*, further illuminated Kennan’s views on the Soviet threat and a multi-faceted way forward.

Containment became the overriding objective of US national security policy with *NSC 20/4*, approved by President Truman in November 1948. This document remained the definitive statement on United States policy toward the Soviet Union until April 1950, and was the foundation for all subsequent national security documents throughout the Cold War. It maintained that the Soviet Union was motivated by its ideology to expand its influence throughout the world, and claimed that this expansion was a threat to the security of the United States. It described the communist doctrine as a straightforward rationale for expansion, holding that each satellite communist party was responsible not only to its own people, but also to all the socialist countries and specifically to the international communist movement led by the Soviet Union. The document officially established the strategy of containment, and its validity for a long term approach in the West’s struggle against the Soviet Union and communism. As an enduring testament of this

⁶⁷ George Lewis Gaddis. *Strategies of Containment: A Critical Appraisal of Postwar American*

strategy, all subsequent presidents after Truman subscribed to containment as the focal point of American grand strategy and foreign policy.

Containment was a strategy to limit and prevent Soviet expansion. It was an approach that said communism was like water and would trickle into countries that were weak and unstable. It subscribed to the notion that ideologically similar states easily unite, and the West must pay particular attention to unaligned states in which ideologies are battling for supremacy. Clearly then, if an ideology underscores universal domination, it is imperative that those who will be negatively affected by its ascendancy, never allow it to spread.

How to Think Big in the Face of New Dangers:

Grand strategy is a broad subject. Grand strategy deals with the momentous choices that a nation makes in foreign affairs. A grand strategy establishes a nation's goals and how best a nation's leaders can use their countries power to attain these goals. It lays out how all of the instruments of statecraft; political, military, economic and informational elements are integrated and employed with one another to achieve those goals.⁶⁸ Containment during the Cold War was a bipartisan grand strategy that encompassed all forms of national power. The overarching theme for containment strategy was embodied in the Truman Doctrine, where President Truman initially proposed aiding Greece and Turkey so that they could combat a communist insurgency. The underlying idea of the Truman Doctrine was to provide aid to countries that were under pressure to conform to a communist ideology and subsequently fall under the Soviet sphere of influence and control. The form of aid could consist of support from any of the elements of national power, based on the specific situation of that country or region.

Identifying and prioritizing national interests and related foreign policy objectives that serve the people are the first imperatives of developing a coherent strategy, normally defined in broad and ambiguous language. The fundamental objectives, or ends, of foreign policy in 1947

Security Policy (Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 1982), 4.

were described by George F. Kennan as two fold, to protect the security of the nation, and to advance the welfare of its people.⁶⁹ This would be realized through promoting a world order in which the United States could make the maximum contribution to the peaceful and orderly development of other nations and derive maximum benefit from global stability and access to world markets.

The national interests and objectives of the late 1940s were not much different than they are today, or were shortly after the birth of the United States as a sovereign nation for that matter. The real difference is in the application of the elements of national power within the context of the current environment and situation. The context of US national interests after WWII had become more global in nature with the US ascendance as the leader of the Western world. The national interests of the day consisted first and foremost of physical security; the protection from attack of its territory, people, property, and the protection of the US domestic political system and the structure of civic values from external threats. Perceived Soviet strength relative to a weakened post war Europe and Soviet development of atomic weapons were both indirect and direct physical threats to European and American physical security. This was the dominant area of national interest leading to the strategy of containment during the Cold War. Second, Americans expected their government to ensure economic prosperity and promote the domestic welfare of the people. Economic prosperity required access to resources and world markets, and a stable environment for trade. The expansion of Soviet spheres under the rubric of Soviet security threatened American access to potential trading partners, natural resources and subsequently domestic economic growth. And third, Americans continued to insist that their government attune foreign policy to the values that the country stood for. The support for democracy and human rights was very important, particularly in the political environment and simple dichotomy of

⁶⁸ Art, 1-2.

⁶⁹ Gaddis, 27.

international communism versus capitalist democracy. The expansion of international communism answering to the leadership in Moscow was a direct affront to democratic ideals.⁷⁰

The objectives of a grand strategy and foreign policy of containment required the adept synchronization and coordination of all of the instruments of government in order to be realized. George F. Kennan accurately identified that it was not only Russian military power that was threatening the US, it was Russian political power. Since the threat was not entirely military, then it could not be effectively met with entirely military means. Politics, information, and economics also played vital, significant and primary roles. Additionally, identification and support of local forces of resistance to communism were well worth strengthening.⁷¹ Kennan's view of containment proposed that the United States would "draw the line," defending future targets of Soviet expansion using all elements of national power. However, it must be understood that containment was not a solely defensive policy, but a combination of defensive and offensive measures to "fragment the international communist movement."⁷² The ultimate objective was to build an international order of independent power in which nations subject to Soviet pressure and expansion would have the means and the will to resist it themselves.

Containment Strategy and the Application of the Elements of Power

Kennan accurately envisioned the struggle with communism as a long struggle of ideas, or ideology. The global struggle crossed all elements of national power, wielded in a manner that provided continuous engagement of the threat, and most importantly the decisive terrain of vulnerable governments and populations. This test of time would be on America's side if the government and people stick to the basic values of democratic society. This, in and of itself was the basis of an information campaign of truth, exemplifying the superiority of the American way

⁷⁰ Sean M. Lynn-Jones and Steven Miller (eds). *America's Strategy in a Changing World*, essay by Terry L. Deibel, "Strategies before Containment: Patterns for the Future" (Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 1992): 41-42.

⁷¹ Gaddis, 40-41.

⁷² Ibid., 47 and 56.

of life and governmental system. Most importantly, Kennan's strategy of containment required flexibility, the capacity to shift direction, emphasis, and if necessary expenditure of resources in response to the course of events, without losing sight of long-range objectives.⁷³

An information campaign was the foundation on which all other elements of power would stand, and reinforced with evidence of US diplomatic engagement and physical commitment of resources in the economic and military realms. A number of key elements reflect Kennan's thinking for the application of a successful information program. First, domestic and international transparency, including the idea that there would be no effort to conceal disagreements with the Russians; rather, disagreements would be aired openly and frankly, but in a non-provocative manner.⁷⁴ Most importantly, the information element was designed to always keep the US public informed of the threat and the program of addressing it, while simultaneously influencing the peoples of the Soviet Communist sphere of the absolute superiority of democratic capitalism. Kennan viewed the challenge through a lens of psychology. The goal was to produce attitudes in the minds of potential adversaries, as well as potential allies and the American people that would facilitate the emergence of an international order more favorable to the interests of the United States.⁷⁵ As such, a successful information campaign for a strategy of containment was a multi-lateral program to influence the American people, US allies, the enemy, and the source of power of the enemy, the people subjected to international communism.

Second, an interwoven economic program in which domestic and international advancement underscored the premise of the superiority of democracy and capitalism through words and deeds. It transcended ideology into action in the form of fiscal programs to improve stability in weakened nations, and the domestic lives of Americans. The basic idea was that individuals in a capitalist economy were invested in their own success, versus that of a state run economy in which there is no relative reward or value from a common worker's production and

⁷³ Ibid., 86.

⁷⁴ Ibid., 21.

⁷⁵ Ibid., 36-37

technical skill except that which was good of the state. Combined with the information campaign, this was a recipe for the gradual decline of the morale of the people and the economic well-being of the Soviet inspired communist state.

Beyond the basic differences between a capitalist and socialist economy, two key programs evolved as part of the containment strategy. The foreign economic element was specifically represented by the Marshall Plan, or the European Recovery Program. These programs aided only non-Communist nations. American aid promoted Western European economic revival, resulting in a solidified stand against communist aggression in the east and stabilized governments that support democracy through economic well-being. In many ways, the Marshall Plan satisfied those who wanted US foreign policy to be generous and idealistic, and those who demanded hard line politics with the Soviets; it helped feed the starving and shelter the homeless, and at the same time exemplified the economic might of the most prosperous capitalist state to the communists, putting the Western European economy back on its feet.

Numerous benefits from economic programs solidified the containment strategy of the day. The Marshall Plan, it should be noted, benefited the American economy as well. The money was used by the Europeans to buy goods from the United States, and they were shipped across the Atlantic on American merchant vessels. The political effects may have been just as important as the economic ones. Marshall Plan aid allowed the nations of Western Europe to relax austere measures and rationing, reducing discontent and bringing political stability. As a result, communist influence on Western Europe was greatly reduced, and communist parties throughout the region faded in popularity. The trade relations fostered by the Marshall Plan helped forge the strong military alliance represented by NATO that would persist throughout the Cold War as a bulwark against Soviet communist aggression and expansion. The domestic economic development program, coined the Fair Deal, gave reality to the American dream of improved housing, schools, and health, and setting an example for nations we hoped to influence through a higher standard of American quality of life. These programs exemplified to the world the

superiority of the US system of democratic government and capitalist economy in improving the lives of everyday citizens, and the generosity of helping others.

The third element of a successful containment strategy was diplomatic and political in nature. A clear diplomatic campaign toward the Soviet Union and its satellites existed for the purpose of influencing Soviet leadership, winning more allies abroad, and gaining popular support at home.⁷⁶ The concept was based on the continuation of political engagement with the clear understanding that the Soviet policy of the expansion of communism would always be a counter to maintaining peace and stability throughout the world. It would have been nearly impossible to influence Soviet leadership without some sort of direct diplomatic or political engagement.

The diplomatic campaign did not solely focus on the Soviet Union, it included the political encouragement of those nations outside of Soviet Communist influence to remain so, and to support aggressive pursuit of political pressure on the Soviet Union and its adjunct nations to change their international behavior of expansion through unstable governments. To be effective, this required a significant amount of US domestic political bipartisan solidarity. Outward signs of American disunity always had an exhilarating effect on the whole of the communist movement.

And finally, a credible, but not necessarily overwhelming military capability was the final piece of a complete strategy of containment. The United States would reconstitute its military as a deterrent, and fully support military aid to US allies in thwarting Soviet expansive tendencies. The collective security and military arrangements embodied in NATO membership, and the military build-up prescribed by NSC68 were the hallmarks of this element of containment.⁷⁷ NATO, established in 1949, represented an international organization for the collective security specifically organized to deter Soviet military encroachment into Western Europe. The military

⁷⁶ Ibid., 19-21.

⁷⁷ Walter A. McDougal. *Promised Land, Crusader State*, (New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1997), 166, and Ernest R. May (ed). *American Cold War Strategy: Interpreting NSC 68*, (Boston, MA: Bedford Books of St. Martin's Press), 2-3.

element was a physical reminder to allies of US commitment to their security, and to Soviet leadership of the likely risks associated with communist expansion by force.

Containment was successful due to a few straightforward reasons. There was a commonly identified threat of Soviet sponsored communism with its ideological goal of world-wide expansion and domination. This common view of the threat was held among the US leadership, the American population, and its global allies. Second, there was an economically resurgent Western Europe, and an economically strong and dynamic Japan allied to the United States that was not susceptible to communist ideology. Successful and newly industrialized countries supported by the West had become significant American trading partners ensuring that the Soviets could not dominate any major power centers in North America, Europe or Asia. Third, there were continuous diplomatic and political engagements of the threat, allies, and at risk countries where Western influence had an impact on political actions. Fourth, a robust and forward military presence on the Eurasian continent, combined with the NATO alliance of free nations committed to physically checking the threat of Soviet communist expansion gave confidence to allies, and was a physical warning to the threat. Lastly, underlying all of these factors was a foundation of consistent information regarding bipartisan US policy, actions, democratic governance and the capitalist American way of life that influenced US allies, communist leaders, subjects of communist states, and the American population.

A few other factors of note worked against Soviet communist expansion. They include crude and counterproductive Soviet behavior, such as the Berlin blockade, support of North Korea in the Korean conflict, and the invasion of Afghanistan. Additionally, the declining appeal of the Soviet model of government that embodied a centrally controlled and planned economy for world populations, and the Soviets inability to turn influence into control, particularly in regions

removed from it geographically doomed their political survival.⁷⁸ As a result, the Soviet Union collapsed in 1991, marking the official end of US containment strategy and foreign policy.

Kennan's creation of a multi-faceted approach to containment is applicable to the problems of our present age. The major differences between communism and terrorism are apparent. Kennan was dealing directly with the behavior of a sovereign state with defined borders, an established population, a recognized government and official ideology. Militant Islam and the terrorism that is associated with it cannot be defined by borders, nor do they play by any rules of diplomatic conduct. However, the application of his strategic thought is precisely the imperative to go beyond manifestations of a problem and get at its sources; to go from consequences to causes. Kennan's understanding of the influence of Soviet communism as the product of ideology and circumstances is applicable today. His solution of a long-term and patient strategy of containment with the application of counter-force through the use of all elements of national power at a series of constantly shifting geographic and political points is the solution we need today, a multi-lateral application of counter-force through all means at our disposal. There are salient lessons to be learned from Kennan. We must go beyond manifestations to examine the ideology and circumstances of the threat. We must see the struggle as protracted and difficult, but not necessarily a fight to the finish. We must accurately identify that the challenge is not only a military one. We must understand that the adversaries are the weaker parties, not only in military terms but in the basic vitality of belief systems. We must proceed with patience and also with confidence that the struggle is winnable without a clash of civilizations.⁷⁹

⁷⁸ Terry L. Deibel and John Lewis Gaddis (eds). *Containment Concept and Policy*, (Washington, DC: National Defense University Press, 1986), 586-587.

⁷⁹ Robert L. Hutchings. "The Sources of Terrorist Conduct," *Speech given at Jefferson Literary and Debating Society, University of Virginia* (19 March 2004). Found at http://www.dni.gov/nic/speeches_terrorist_conduct.html, last accessed on 9 October 2006, 1-2.

A CONTAINMENT STRATEGY FOR THE CONTEMPORARY ENVIRONMENT

If militant Islamic ideology were truly inextricably linked to Islam, then there would be no solution but to try to quarantine, or convert one sixth of humanity. Neither is a realistic prospect. And, if the earth-shaking clash of our time is not between two civilizations, it is and must be a clash among the members of one civilization, specifically between militant and moderate progressive Muslims. Just as the deviant Western ideology of communism challenged the modern Western culture of its time and had to be expelled from the West, so it is with militant Islam and the Muslim world. The battle for the soul of Islam will undoubtedly last many years and take many lives, and it is likely to be the greatest ideological battle of the post-cold-war era. The United States as an outsider and an overwhelmingly non-Muslim country, cannot fix the problems of the Muslim world. But as outsiders, the United States in particular, has a critical role in precipitating the battle and influencing its outcome by weakening the militant side and by strengthening the moderate. The purpose should be to weaken militant Islamists where they are in power, deter and contain their expansion, and encourage and support moderate Muslim elements. This requires an assertive policy, one tailored to each country and region. In some cases change can be effected dramatically and swiftly; and in others the evolution will be long and slow. The war against militant Islam has domestic implications as well, both at the policy level of government and at the action level in local communities.

If the United States has over 100 million militant Islamic enemies, they cannot all be incapacitated. Instead, the goal must be to deter attacks and contain expansion and growth. It requires toughness, determination and perseverance of a sort that Americans have not mustered in a long time. It also requires allies. The fight against militant Islam will be won if America has the will and persistence to see it through.⁸⁰

⁸⁰ Pipes, 20-24.

The enemy of the free world is using a unifying ideology based on a transnational and radical interpretation of Islam that has supplanted the Marxist ideology as central in postcolonial insurgencies. Consequently, militant fundamentalist Islam poses a greater and potentially more complex menace than did Marxism.⁸¹ Therefore Western opposition to militant Islam could be more difficult than ideological warfare with socialism or communism. The reality of Islam-based terrorism is that it is a far deeper and more dangerous threat than communism.⁸²

On February 22, 1946, American diplomat George F. Kennan cabled his Long Telegram from Moscow. A veteran observer of the Soviet Union, Kennan had been warning that Soviet communism was expansive in nature and at complete odds with US democratic capitalism. He explained “the Kremlin’s neurotic view of world affairs” in terms of Russia’s historic fear and hostility toward the outside world. The oligarchy that hid behind a mask of Marxist ideology was “committed fanatically to the belief that with the US there can be no permanent compromise, that it is desirable and necessary that the internal harmony of our society be disrupted, our traditional way of life be destroyed, the international authority of our state be broken, if Soviet power is to be secure.”⁸³ This sounds strikingly like a self-description of militant Islamic beliefs.

Comparison of Militant Islam to Communism

During his speech in October of 2005 at the National Endowment for Democracy, President Bush compared militant Islam to Soviet communism. He said:

“The murderous ideology of the Islamic radicals is the great challenge of our new century. Yet, in many ways, this fight resembles the struggle against communism in the last century. Like the ideology of communism, Islamic radicalism is elitist, led by a self-appointed vanguard that presumes to speak for the Muslim masses. Bin Laden says his own role is to tell Muslims, quote, “what is good for them and what is not.” Like the ideology of communism, our new enemy teaches that innocent individuals can be sacrificed to serve a political vision. And this explains their cold-blooded contempt for human life. Like the ideology of communism, our new enemy pursues totalitarian aims. Its leaders pretend to be an aggrieved party, representing the powerless against imperial enemies. In truth

⁸¹ Cassidy, 11.

⁸² Peter C. Newman. “Now for the Hard Part,” *Maclean’s* 116, no. 17 (April 2003): 26.

⁸³ McDougal, 160.

they have endless ambitions of imperial domination, and they wish to make everyone powerless except themselves. Like the ideology of communism, our new enemy is dismissive of free peoples, claiming that men and women who live in liberty are weak and decadent. And Islamic radicalism, like the ideology of communism, contains inherent contradictions that doom it to failure. By fearing freedom -- by distrusting human creativity, and punishing change, and limiting the contributions of half the population -- this ideology undermines the very qualities that make human progress possible, and human societies successful. The rest of their grim vision is defined by a warped image of the past -- a declaration of war on the idea of progress, itself.”⁸⁴

With the triumph of the democratization movement in Eastern Europe and the break-up of the Soviet Union, Islam constitutes the most pervasive and powerful transnational force in the world, with over one billion adherents spread out across the globe.⁸⁵ The rhetoric of good and evil, the tendency toward concrete dichotomy in discourse and action, and the politicization of culture at large suggest that the War on Terrorism remarkably resembles the Cold War.⁸⁶ The Islamic resurgence bears similarity to Marxism in its political manifestations with scriptural texts, visions of the perfect society, commitment to fundamental change, rejection of the powers that be and the Western concept of the nation-state, and doctrinal diversity ranging from moderate reformist to violent revolutionary.⁸⁷

A Cold War analogy is wholly appropriate. During the Cold War, a fanatical ideology aimed at world revolution was defeated by a diverse collection of states that all valued pluralism and liberty, despite individual differences. Like Soviet communism, militant Islam embraces the idea that collectively there can be no resolution of differences due to their radical view of the West and the US in particular; and that the West represents an external threat which legitimizes their violent approach. Competition for global domination between communism and the Western world required leadership from the US, and long-term support from the rest of the world’s

⁸⁴ Bush, George W. President. “Speech at the National Endowment for Democracy,” Washington, DC (Ronald Reagan Building and International Trade Center, 6 October 2005), found at <http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2005/10/20051006-3.html>. Last accessed on 16 November 2006.

⁸⁵ John L. Esposito, *The Islamic Threat: Myth or Reality*, 2.

⁸⁶ Patton Price. “The Islamic Schism,” found at <http://postmodernpotlatch.blogspot.com/ismschism.htm>. Last accessed on 12 October 2006.

democracies. Such leadership and support are even more necessary now. Similar to the Cold War, a battle of ideas enforced through a strategy characterized by patience and firmness for the hearts and minds of the world population is central to the War on Terrorism.⁸⁸

Jihad, interpreted as the religious obligation to battle against non-believers traces words and actions to the Prophet Muhammed himself. Such a view can find immediate analogy to the Leninist-Stalinist rhetoric of the Soviet Union, which for the entire 70 years of its existence perceived itself to be surrounded by enemies in the capitalist world. For the Soviet communist leaders, like militant Islamic leaders of today, the world was divided into a place of submission and an environment of war. This radical ideology, much like communism is motivated to expand, and that expansion is a threat to US and Western security. The communist ideology of expansion held satellite communist parties and countries responsible to the international communist movement just as militant Islamic ideology holds militant Islamic groups responsible to a common vision of a global Islamic state, led by a single caliphate. Like communism, expansion is practiced by militant Islam through insurgent involvement in vulnerable and unstable third world governments. Furthermore, the only way to save the Communist state, or to establish a unified state under a new caliphate, was through the spread of its ideology while closing all avenues of competing ideas off from the protected masses. Like Soviet communism, radicalized forms of Islam today seek to challenge Western democracies through all means, to include infiltration and control of their societies, and through the exploitation of the very means of the institutions which are the hallmark of democratic governance—free speech, popular elections and atomization of society. When matched on the level playing field of open ideas and unencumbered by fanatical psychological influence, Soviet communism failed because it could not provide the degree of satisfaction demanded by those it sought to control when seen in the light of reality in comparison to a rival form of societal organization that was capable of meeting the basic needs and existential

⁸⁷ Samuel P. Huntington. *The Clash of Civilizations; Remaking the World Order*, (New York: Touchstone Books by Simon and Schuster, 1997), 111.

demands of general society.⁸⁹ Militant Islamic ideology faces the same basic dilemma and has the potential to realize the same fate as international communism. That is to crumble under its own weight with time and consistent counter pressure.

National Interests and International Conditions Influence National Strategy

Grand strategy is born from international conditions and national interests as the basis to accomplish objectives that are in the best interest of the nation as a whole. In this context, strategy is the employment of the instruments of power to achieve the political objectives of the state in cooperation, or in competition with other actors pursuing their own objectives. Interests or ends are desired end states such as survival, economic well-being, and enduring national values. The national elements of power are the resources, or means used to promote or advance national interests. Strategy is the pursuit, protection, or advancement of these interests through the application of the instruments of power. Strategy is all about how leadership will use the power available to the state to exercise control over sets of circumstances and geographic locations to achieve the ends that support state interests.⁹⁰

International conditions have solidified US national interests of a global nature since the end of WWII, and more so since the end of the Cold War. The fact that there is no peer competitor state, and the emergence of a global terrorist threat represents a difference in global conditions, yet further solidifies the enduring national interests of the United States.

The first national interest is homeland defense. The United States will continue to concern itself first and foremost with threats to its physical security. That is protection from attack of its territory, people, domestic political systems and values. It includes the prevention, deterrence, and reduction of the threat of attack by nuclear, biological, or chemical weapons of mass destruction against the mainland United States. In the current context, prevention and

⁸⁸ Kilcullen, David. "Countering Global Insurgency," *Small Wars Journal* (30 November 2004). Found at <http://smallwarsjournal.com/documents/kilcullen.pdf>, last accessed on 4 April 2007, 28-29.

⁸⁹ Sands-Pignot, 11-12.

deterrence of terrorist attacks is the greatest objective in meeting this most basic of national interests.

Second, Americans will continue to expect their government to advance economic prosperity. Modernization and globalization of the world at large has led to deep international economic inter-dependence. This implies a responsibility to support the stability of major global systems, such as trade, financial markets, energy supplies, and the environment. Secure access to natural resources and particularly to Persian Gulf oil at a stable and reasonable price and international economic openness is crucial to meet this basic interest. The development of alternate sources of power can significantly reduce dependency on the Middle East, but until then access remains an important element of national economic interest.

Third, Americans continue to insist that its government attune its foreign policy to the values for which they believe their country stands. The last decade has illustrated that democracy is thriving and more popular in the light of the fall of communism, particularly in Eastern Europe.⁹¹ This realization has further fueled America's continued interest in the spread of democracy, and the observance of human rights as the third national interest.⁹² The radical and extremist ideology of totalitarian governance and the oppression of society through the literal application of Islamic law advocated by militant Islam are squarely in conflict with democratic values and human rights.

Kennan's vision of stronger nations using a combination of information, diplomatic, economic, and military programs to encourage and assist struggling states in their efforts to resist coercion and maintain sovereignty enjoys renewed wisdom in the new world order. First and foremost the United States must approach militant Islam multi-laterally as part of a unified global effort. Unilateral application of national power is ineffective if not destructive in attaining the desired political end state. Pure military responses, particularly those taken unilaterally, do not

⁹⁰ Yarger, 1.

⁹¹ Lynn-Jones and Miller, eds, 43.

⁹² Art, 3.

draw support from the global community and have proven to be ineffective. Diplomacy sets the conditions for effective containment, but again a unilateral approach does not suffice. Economic sanctions alone tend to damage infrastructure and turn the population against the West, and if imposed unilaterally do not garner the necessary cooperation to achieve the desired end state. Particularly under the new conditions of the global environment, information as an arm of national power has the potential to significantly influence hostile regimes and non-state actors if used in conjunction with the other elements. The persuasive power of multi-lateral application of diplomacy, economic action, military forces, and global real time access to information can be convincing, if not decisive.⁹³

The analogy of a Kennan's early containment strategy for communism and a similar strategy for the GWOT is appropriate due to the similarities of the ideological threat, supremacy of the US as the leader of Western nations, and the world situation. In spite of the extraordinary changes that have taken place since 1946, there are many similarities shared by the post-World War II (WWII) and post-Cold War eras. Both created a need to repair societies and areas of the world due to the results of war. There is a need to rebuild those parts of the world adversely affected by years of communist influence and colonial interference; much like Western Europe was restored under the auspices of the Marshall Plan. Some of the former Soviet satellites have made significant progress in re-establishing themselves as independent states, but the process of movement from a bipolar world to a unipolar environment and globalization remains incomplete. Emerging and failing states remain the most vulnerable to hostile influence, both internal and external. Once hotbeds for communist expansion, these struggling nations now find themselves susceptible to new parasites like militant Islamic influences bent on terrorism and organized crime to support their habits.⁹⁴ There are differences between the threats of Soviet inspired communist expansion and militant Islam. However, those differences can be minimized through

⁹³ Brian Lindamood (LTC). "Containment Revisited: An Old Approach to Future Challenges," *US Army War College Strategy Research Project*, US Army War College (15 February 2002), 3-4.

⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, 1.

the adjustment of the methods in the application of containment rather than disregarding the entire concept itself.

The United States was able to prevail in the last epic ideological struggle, the Cold War, only after coming up with a durable strategy based on a thorough study of communist ideology and tactics. That strategy was to contain the threat while offering a better ideological alternative based on political and personal freedom combined with economic prosperity. It is imperative to recognize that another such struggle is unfolding and that it requires a comparably durable strategy. Containment sits well with the American people. It is a proven strategy for a long war. It fits the American psyche, calling forth that spread-eagle, us-against-them defiance never far from the surface of the American personality, and unifying the nation against a threat to its oldest and dearest tradition, liberty, under siege at home and abroad.⁹⁵

Contemporary Containment Strategy

Containment, in its original and inspiring form defined by George Kennan, offers a unique opportunity to influence and shape while affording supporting states an equally unique opportunity to participate in the process. The non-military instruments of national power can enjoy unprecedented dominion in problem resolution due to the new conditions of the global environment. Although the counterinsurgencies in Afghanistan and Iraq certainly have heavy military dimensions, the primary global war on terrorism foci should be ideological, informational, political, and economic. The United States will not be successful by using military force alone; it can be successful if it strengthens local reformers and allies, and avoids imposing its own political system and values.⁹⁶

The potential to apply all of the instruments simultaneously across all regions of the world can be realized through a synchronized, synergistic approach to identifying, isolating, and responding to emerging situations, in other words contain. This concept can be visualized as a

⁹⁵ McDougal, 167.

rheostat for each of the elements of national power; diplomatic, economic, information, and military. Each element must be utilized in concert with the others, but at a different intensity for each country or region in question. Piecemeal application of the instruments of national power simply will not work. The security challenges of the new era require a deliberate effort to bring all of our capabilities together, working in concert with each other and those of our allies to address threats, effect change, and guarantee peace.

Existing collective security agreements and organizations can provide the framework for exercising the containment strategy. A premise of the new world order and globalization implies that no one can go it alone, not even the lone superpower, so current and future alliances and coalitions will represent a necessary pillar for success. With emphasis on diplomatic engagement, economic aid and sanctions, and application of simple communications techniques for information operations, nation-states that could not afford rapid build-ups and sustained military actions can now assume an active role in global security, and do so without fear of conceding sovereignty.⁹⁷ This broader, more flexible avenue for the application of containment represents a whole of government, full spectrum approach from situation identification through threat reduction and state restoration. It actually requires all states in the new world order to share in the responsibility for global security.

The contemporary strategy of containment has a foundation built upon an information campaign, with pillars representing diplomatic and political engagement, economic aid and open trade markets, and military aid for deterrence and defense. The bedrock pedestal is an information campaign of truth used to influence the US population, US allies, leaders of militant Islam, countries at risk and most importantly the population subjected to and vulnerable to the militant Islamic ideology. Central to influencing the US population is a clear explanation of the updated grand strategy of containment with bipartisan political support of its application. Additionally containment strategy must be acknowledged and supported by US Allies, and alluring to nations

⁹⁶ Cassidy, 11-12.

not allied with the US and the West currently. A consistent truthful message identifying the threat and the long term application of multi-lateral national resources against that threat can and will gain international momentum. The leaders of militant Islam and those nations that actively or passively allow it to thrive and survive must understand the implications of their actions from an international perspective. Their individual and regime's physical, economic, and political survival is literally at risk unless they conform. And finally, the truth about the advantages of democratic society, open and vibrant trade, the rule of law and the opportunity for an improved way of life must get to "at risk" populations consistently and repeatedly, thereby placing doubt in the advantage of, and their support for a totalitarian ideology. This campaign must be supported by unilateral US, and multilateral international political, economic, and military actions that reinforce the truth.

The information component of containment strategy must be designed for the ideological struggle between the West and militant fundamentalist Islam. It must be executed in a way that Jihadists see the West supporting the modernists of Islam and propagate their moderate vision by empowering them with a broad platform from which to voice and disseminate their views. This component must target the weaknesses in militant Islamic ideological credentials. The United States and our allies must oppose the militant's distorted version of Islam. We must contest their interpretation of Islam and reveal the inaccuracies. We must expose their connections to illegal groups and operations. We must make public the consequences of there associates' actions. We must illustrate their inability to develop their countries in positive ways. We must direct and target messages to the young, to women, to traditionalists, and to Muslim minorities in the West. We must depict violent terrorists and extremists correctly as disturbed and delusional, not as heroes. We must persuade journalists to investigate corruption, immorality, and hypocrisy in

⁹⁷ Lindamood, 1-2.

fundamentalist circles. And, we must promote ruptures among the loose coalition of militant Islamic terrorist groups.⁹⁸

The first pillar of a contemporary containment strategy is diplomatic or political engagement. One of the keys to eliminating militant Islam as a threat is to transform the permissive political environment in which it operates in the Muslim world. Instead, the opposite has occurred. Middle Eastern Muslim anger at the US has reached an all-time high and continues to grow, driven by outrage at US actions in Iraq, Afghanistan, and support of Israel. This has supplied fertile ground for militant Islamic recruiters.⁹⁹ Additionally, it is difficult to positively influence vulnerable and anti-Western regimes unless the host government is actively engaged in pursuing the national objectives of the United States in concert with the international community. The US, with Western allies must diplomatically pressure nation-states to not accept the virulent version of rhetoric and incitement that militant Islam vocalizes and exemplifies. Most importantly, political support of regimes with the potential of providing a stable environment is more advantageous to the West and the US than instituting democratic reform and governance. In fact, stable governance provides the foundation for the US to influence that government with the other instruments of power. Economic and military aid in all forms are powerful elements of political influence, particularly when combined with multi-lateral political engagement of like-minded allies. Used together, the physical actions of economic advancement, military support for national defense, and diplomatic encouragement provide the outward visible signals to reinforce the information campaign of truth.

The second pillar is economic, and includes open and free trade markets. The post Cold War world needs a Global Marshall Plan, with economic advantages for the rebuilding of countries formerly under Soviet control, those with unstable governments vulnerable to militant Islamic insurgency, and for US investment and trade. The first and most important region to focus economic power is in the Middle East, where economic stagnation coupled with rapid population

⁹⁸ Cassidy, 16.

growth has consistently reduced living standards. In the days of the late 1970s oil boom, annual per-capita GDP growth of over 5% fueled high expectations. During this time GDP per-capita grew from \$1,845 to \$2,300. Today, after adjusting for inflation, it stands at \$1,500, which reflects an overall decline in living standards over 30 years. Only sub-Saharan Africa has done worse. Average R&D expenditures in this same region on a per capita basis are one-sixth of Cuba's and less than one-fifteenth of Japan's. Furthermore, in economic terms the combined economic weight of Arab states is less than that of Spain. Other than oil, all of the Middle East's exports remain less than that of Finland. Finally, declining rates of investment in fixed capital structure and an inability to attract substantial foreign direct investment contributes to a spiraling national decline in productivity.¹⁰⁰

Alone, this is a dire situation. However, combined with a declining education system, and without access to modern information technology literal religious influence becomes further entrenched and produces a whole new generation of militant Islamic Jihadists. According to the United Nation's Arab Human Development Report, the state of Arab civilization is an ugly story. There are 18 computers per 1000 citizens, compared to the global average of 78.3. Only 1.6 percent of the population has internet access. Less than one book a year is translated into Arabic per million people, compared to over 1000 per million for developed countries. Arabs publish only 1.1 percent of books globally, despite making up over 5 percent of the global population, with religious books dominating the market.¹⁰¹ A global Marshall Plan designed to jumpstart the economy of countries in poverty can positively influence the population that there is hope for positive change. Providing economic aid and linking it with educational development opportunities can provide tempting alternatives to the majority not enamored with militant Islamic methods and indoctrination.

⁹⁹ Karon, "Why Al-Qaeda Thrives," 1.

¹⁰⁰ Lacey, 9.

¹⁰¹ Ibid., 10.

The third pillar of this proposed containment strategy is the completion of a transformed US military, with a credible deterrent capability but not necessarily overwhelming as it relates to cost. This pillar should include the training of indigenous forces in places where militant Islamic insurgencies have gained a foothold, and where intelligence indicates that governments are vulnerable. From an international perspective, military alliances similar to NATO that are global, or regional reduce the need and costs for overwhelming individual national forces and bolster collective security while gaining international support for action when required.

The military may need to be employed if the situation warrants. However, the military element would always have a multi-national flavor and would likely become a supporting pillar quickly, rather than serving as the main element for resolution as conflict progresses. The use of the military arm reinforces the political and informational components of a US and international containment policy through demonstrated action.

The essence of the challenge should be targeting the disaffected Muslim populations all over the world. Assisting states like Kuwait, Bahrain, Jordan, Yemen, Morocco, Malaysia, and Indonesia means encouraging those populations who found their own brand of renewal within the construct of Islam without abrogating modernity to determine their own political future. Diligent support for populations using all elements of national power through friendly and stable governments would create the real possibility of arresting the global Islamic insurgency. This approach could defuse the loathing bin-Laden ideology of al-Qaeda and diminish its appeal.¹⁰²

Capacity for a unified civil-military interagency approach to contain the threat at the strategic, operational, and tactical level is the prescription for success in this global battle. Part of the solution is an improved and stronger cross-embedded interagency command and liaison program. There can be no such thing as a purely military solution because insurgency is not primarily a military activity. Key principles must be considered in each case, and they include a multi-faceted and coordinated whole of government approach; political primacy and political

aim; information to influence the people at stake and at home; separating the insurgent leader from the people, and neutralizing him militarily; the early and deliberate employment of indigenous forces in security roles; and an economic solution to the ills of the country at stake and in context with the rest of the region is the only effective method in helping achieve a successful outcome.¹⁰³

Militant Islamic terrorism cannot be contained without taking full advantage of its vulnerabilities, as described by the key judgments of the National Intelligence Estimate of 2006. As this document stated, “if fully exposed and exploited, could begin to slow the spread of the movement.”¹⁰⁴ This must leverage the limited appeal of Jihadist’s radical ideology, the emergence of respected voices of moderation, and criticism of the violent tactics employed against mostly Muslim citizens. Their greatest vulnerability is that their ultimate political solution is a brand of Shari’a based governance that imposes a religious and political straitjacket on all social structure.¹⁰⁵

The proposed strategy of containment inspired by George Kennan includes the concepts of political engagement, economic assistance, military aid and deterrence all acting as pillars on an information campaign of truth. Containment is aimed at the vision advertised by the militant Islamic leadership and the spread of the militant ideology they preach. Engagement with moderate Islamic nations, leaders, and people is essential with the hope of finding middle ground or a meeting place. The strategy should also have an economic assistance and educational advancement component that may take a generation or longer to generate marked results. The security component requires a regional framework. NATO can play a key role in deepening and broadening its dialogue and influence to expand or establish a similar organization for the Middle

¹⁰² Cassidy, 15-16.

¹⁰³ Ibid., 17.

¹⁰⁴ Declassified Key Judgements of the National Intelligence Estimate, 2.

¹⁰⁵ Ibid., 2.

East. Finally, the building of cross-cultural contacts as part of the long-term effort in establishing peace and stability is essential.¹⁰⁶

Challenges for this strategy into the future are multi-faceted, but not overwhelming. First, the enormous growth of militant Islam as an alternative to the current political situation has gained ground against those more attracted to secular solutions. Second, regional conflicts such as the ongoing Palestinian-Israeli conflict, to include tension with Lebanon, combined with the chronic instability of many African nations provide fertile ground which militant Islam aggressively seeks to exploit. Third, growing divisions among Western nations about how to deal with this threat allow militant Islam to take advantage of cracks in a potential multi-national unified stance. And finally, the breakdown of US bipartisan foreign policy consensus allows militant Islam the opportunity to gain an informational advantage.¹⁰⁷

The way forward for the United States and the West is to identify and then meet the challenges in dynamic and multi-faceted approaches specific to the region and countries infected with this version of Islam. First engage more, not less, with the peoples of the Muslim world. The goal is to restore moderate Islam as a secular religion rather than a violent political movement. This includes the effective transition to pluralist and secular state systems from closed religious based world views that must be encouraged, accelerated, and resourced. The arc of conflict caused by economic dislocation and disparities must be addressed and remedied to include equitable distribution of resources and wealth that members of Muslim societies are entitled to. It is imperative to continue the progress made in the application of new technologies and legal initiatives to wrest and maintain advantage over adversaries antagonistic to secular models of liberal, participatory democracy through the use of all elements of national power in concert with Western allies. Encourage from within the transformation of Islam from a political ideology to spiritual faith, wherein the state reasserts its role as the primary provider and arbiter

¹⁰⁶ Hutchings, 9-10.

¹⁰⁷ Terry L. Deibel and John Lewis Gaddis (eds). *Containment Concept and Policy*, (Washington, DC: National Defense University Press, 1986), 587-588.

for societal needs and wants by retaking control of critical social spheres such as education, welfare distribution, health provision and public safety from radical Islamic organizations. Enlist and encourage those voices and leaders of moderation to serve as models for the next generation of Muslims so that Islam becomes compatible with the fundamental precepts of secular societies. Western investments over the next several years in “at risk” countries in training of teachers as well as building and equipping schools established and run by secular state authorities would pay high dividends.¹⁰⁸

The grand strategic concept that provides the best chance of success is the one that served us well in the Cold War—containment. Containment will mean adopting and maintaining difficult policy choices. Working closely with European nations against mass migration is critical. Renewing close ties with Turkey, and making that nation the bulwark against the effect of Arab collapse. Working to help modernize and integrate the Russian military to enhance Europe’s defense structure. Ensuring that China is a partner in this containment effort, and propping up weak border-states that are already dealing with the spillover of conflict, such as Pakistan and the new Caucasus states is essential. Assisting the Iranian popular will to establish a government not based on religious oligarchy. The West must plan for the security of critical resources during upheavals and regional turmoil. Global effects of Arab collapse, such as terrorist groups already evident in places like Indonesia and the Philippines must be reversed. Clearly recognizing and advertising the threat of militant Islam, and assist Muslim’s outside of the Arab world to find their own interpretations of their faith and not fall prey to those being voiced by militant Islamic camps. It will not be easy and will not happen overnight. It also requires the support of other nations, and a common vision of the threat is imperative.¹⁰⁹

The US should make plans for a steady, consistent effort over a long period of time, and not for any imaginary peak of danger. Militant Islam’s fundamental belief in the irreconcilability and incompatibility of its ideology and capitalism is at the heart of this debate. The principle task

¹⁰⁸ Sands-Pignot, 35.

for the West is to get the message across to the masses of the Middle East, other majority Muslim nations, and the rest of the world the realities of life under Shari'a law and the militant Islamic totalitarian system. Success cannot be assured without first grasping the essential point that this is a global ideological crisis. If firm action is not taken to hold back the expansive militant Islamic threat, it will not end simply in the Middle East. The contrast remains between a somewhat divided West and the single-minded purposefulness of militant Islam.¹¹⁰

EVALUATION OF THE PROPOSED STRATEGY

In evaluating a strategy of containment for the GWOT, Arthur F. Lykke, Jr.'s Army War College strategy model, with ends, ways, and means as the centerpiece is most appropriate. Strategy in the Army War College curriculum focuses on the nation-state and the use of the elements of power to serve state interests; it is the way that a nation implements the elements to achieve its objectives, or national interests. The assessment of a containment strategy for the GWOT then requires a holistic look at the proposed application of the elements of national power to determine if the nation's objectives or national interests are being served.

A viable strategy is based on the following premises--it is proactive and anticipatory; the end state must be known; it must recognize an appropriate balance among the objectives sought, the methods to pursue the objectives, and the resources available; political purpose must dominate strategy; it is hierarchical, comprehensive and holistic; it is developed through analysis and knowledge of the strategic situation/environment; and some risk is inherent to all strategy, and the best any strategy can offer is a favorable balance against failure.¹¹¹ The proposed strategy of containment meets all of these premises. It seeks to control or manage aspects of the environment as opposed to reacting to it. Containment aspires to adequately influence the global, regional and state situations before instability and violent actions threaten Western, and specifically US

¹⁰⁹ Lacey, 12.

¹¹⁰ Ernest R. May (ed). *American Cold War Strategy: Interpreting NSC 68*, (Boston, MA: Bedford Books of St. Martin's Press), 96 and 149.

¹¹¹ Yarger, 1.

physical security and prosperity. In conjunction with Western allies, applied containment strategy anticipates the expansion of militant Islam into vulnerable nations and applies political pressure, economic and educational assistance, access to the facts of militant Islam's vision and goals, and intelligence or military aid in order to physically defend the people from the coercion and terrorist tactics used by Islamic militants. Those that use this strategy will anticipate situations that have escalated beyond the capability of host nation governments through multi-national security structures such as NATO to intervene and restore order, reestablishing legitimate governance while aiding the security forces loyal to that government and the people of the host nation.

The proposed containment strategy analyzes and understands the desired outcome in the context of the internal and external environment to accomplish the national objectives. The national interests of the United States and the objectives of foreign policy are straightforward. Physical security of the United States' and US allies' territory, people and government institutions; free trade and access to natural resources and global markets in the pursuit of economic prosperity; and the advancement of democratic values and human rights remain the steadfast interest and goals of the American public.

The ends, ways and means are the integral whole of a viable strategy of containment. The proper balance among them, based on an accurate assessment of the environment must be consistently managed. The proposed containment strategy for the GWOT is designed under the premise of flexible application of the elements of national power like a rheostat, increasing some and decreasing others in accordance with the situation within each respective country and region. This requires adept monitoring and situational awareness in order to synchronize and integrate all forms of influence in a timely manner and as the environment changes. This level of effort requires authoritative or structural adjustment of current US governmental policies and institutions, and adaptable application of resources to changing circumstances not addressed in this paper. However, the proposed strategy of containment recommends balanced application of

the methods to achieve national objectives within the limits of global alliances and available resources.

The policy of containment expresses the desired end state sought by the government. In its finest form containment is the clear articulation of guidance for the employment of the instruments of power towards the attainment of the national end state. It is the clear articulation of the national goals by the president, followed by an accepted common vision of the global ideological threat. It is bipartisan support of a proven strategy adjusted to the current world environment, establishing the overarching political purpose in guiding the elements to achieve national goals. This can be achieved through a bipartisan policy of containment. The National Security Strategy lays out broad objectives and direction for the more detailed use of all the instruments of power. The proposed national strategy of containment explicitly describes the broad objectives and direction, but requires adept application of all forms of power at different levels dependent on the country and region in question. This represents necessary nesting of objectives from national through the lens of regional dynamics to the country in question, and the appropriate selection of tools, to include the size of the tool to achieve objectives based on identified dynamics.

The proposed containment strategy is comprehensive and holistic. It uses foresight to understand that the application of concepts and resources to achieve objectives has second and third order effects on the environment, regionally and globally. The proposed containment strategy is also hierarchical regarding effects, cascading up and down the levels of conflict; strategic, operational, and tactical. Containment strategy is applied and modified through analysis and knowledge of the ever changing strategic situation and operational environment. However, no strategy is without risk. The best any strategy can offer is a favorable balance against failure, and the proposed containment strategy offers the best under the current and projected international context.

Art Lykke gave coherent form to a theory of strategy with his articulation of the three-legged stool model illustrating that strategy = ends + ways + means, and if these were not in balance the strategy assumed greater risk. The stool or the model tilts if the three legs are not kept in balance. By using the theory to break containment strategy into component parts, it can be examined for suitability, feasibility, acceptability, and an assessment made of the proper balance among the component parts.¹¹²

Containment is suitable, feasible and acceptable as a contemporary strategy for America and its allies. It is designed to accomplish the broad objectives of foreign policy to achieve national and international interests. The integrated and synchronized actions defined within the strategy of containment in concert with Western partners have a track record of success from the Cold War, and under modification will continue realize the national goals in light of the global ideological threat. Containment is feasible. The United States has the means available to realize success with this strategy without undue hardship on the American people. The trick will be to moderate resources properly between the elements of power in order to get the desired effect within the constraints of government structure. Constructive dialogue in the domestic and international political environment leading to unison in both arenas will go a long way in achieving success through shared burdens. And finally, containment is acceptable. Actually, containment as described and proposed is preferable to other more unilateral forms of strategy. It has the potential to better support regional stability and gradual political reformation in vulnerable countries. It has the potential to force Islam to provide an alternative that is spiritual in nature and secular in structure by supporting political, economic and governmental forms that care for the population better than militant or political Islam could ever hope to. The long term vision of peaceful populations operating as part of the global community of open exchange of ideas, resources and trade justifies the marginal costs of Western nations and the US in general.

¹¹² Ibid., 6-8.

THE WAY AHEAD IS CONTAINMENT

America is at war with a transnational terrorist movement fueled by a radical ideology of hatred, oppression and murder.¹¹³ The principal terrorist enemy confronting the United States is a worldwide movement of extremist organizations, networks, and individuals – and their state and non-state supporters – that commonly exploit Islam and use terrorism for ideological ends. This ideology unites the movement with a common vision, a common set of ideas about the nature and destiny of the world, and a common goal of ushering in totalitarian rule. The movement is united in its application of the methods of oppression, violence, and hate. Our terrorist enemies exploit Islam to serve a violent political vision fueled by a false belief that the United States is the cause of the problems affecting Muslims today. Our enemies seek to expel Western power and influence from the world, and establish regimes that rule according to a violent and intolerant distortion of Islam.¹¹⁴ We face a global terrorist movement that justifies the use of violence against innocents in the name of a religious radical ideology.¹¹⁵ For this enemy there is no peaceful coexistence with those who do not subscribe to their distorted and violent view of the world. They accept no dissent and tolerate no alternative points of view. Ultimately, the terrorist enemy we face threatens global peace, international security and prosperity, the rising tide of democracy, and the right of all people to live without fear of indiscriminate violence.¹¹⁶

Militant Islamists have become the new threat to secular views of liberal and pluralist democracy. They have interpreted Islam into a populist message and transformed their version of Islam into a violent ideology. They have been successful in expressing rage, articulating discontent, and have provided an alternative to institutions and governments that have failed or never worked to start with. They are not afraid to challenge traditional religious and political elites of Islamic societies as they vie for power, and portray these leaders as being controlled by

¹¹³ President George W. Bush. *National Strategy for Combating Terrorism* (Washington, DC, September 2006) 1.

¹¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 5.

¹¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 1.

¹¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 6.

the West and specifically the US, thereby undermining their legitimacy. They have portrayed themselves as defenders of Muslims world-wide by challenging the dominance of American global capitalism and liberal secular democracy. They have transcended conventional models of state-based power and conduct, while at the same time taken advantage of state sanctioned institutions to increase the scope of their operations unlike previous challengers to secular governments. They have purposely gone to places ignored or not thought to be important to Western interests, recruiting and training new generations of activists ready to continue the fight indefinitely. Being both a religion and a violent ideology, militant Islam has been able to recede and hide within religious structures which have normally been immune from control and targeting by liberal secular governments, and therefore able to protect and project its ideology to sympathizers.¹¹⁷

The present strategic situation is comparable with that of the post World War II international environment. At that time, the world experienced two global wars and the devastation left in its wake, and the existing distribution of power had dramatically shifted to a bipolar world. The people of the world yearned for security amidst the rising risk of atomic war. Comparatively, the current post Cold War America continues to struggle for a viable strategy within a new world order. The West has been shaped over the last fifty years by a global Cold War and the collapse of the Soviet Union, leaving those it controlled grasping for identity and international inclusion. The end of the Cold War drastically changed the historical balance of power to a unipolar world with one superpower, and a global population craving integration amidst the rising risk of terrorist attacks, unstable governments and civil war.¹¹⁸

George F. Kennan understood the sources of support for Soviet communist ideology, and that those sources would eventually be discredited causing the collapse of the ideology itself. The sources of militant Islam will similarly be discredited, but it will take time and courage from all those that disagree with their vision of the future. This includes most importantly non-militant

¹¹⁷ Sands-Pignot, 34.

Muslims. These forces have the potential to force militant Islam out of Muslim society and back to the mainstream, if not its total collapse and eventual eradication.

Strategies that seek to combat radical Islam as an ideology must go past the futile exercise of blunting only terrorism, for terrorism is merely the means by which ends are hoped to be gained by those who employ it. The issue is not simply one of fighting terrorism. Rather, it must be to eliminate, or at least ameliorate, the conditions which cause individuals and groups to turn to organizations that promote and justify terrorism in the first place. Strategies must focus on why people have embraced radical Islam as an ideology, and then attempt to find ways by which supporters will reject and discard the underlying assumptions which underpin it. To be coherent and meaningful, a strategy must establish lines of operations which address those spheres of activity Muslim populations are desperate to receive help in.¹¹⁹

The stable predictability envisioned at the end of the Cold War has not materialized. Instead we face similar situations, but under new conditions. The conditions of the new world order present some tough security challenges, but they are not necessarily unprecedented. Information technology has brought modern reality to the world, which has implications across the spectrum of the application of national power. However, the underlying threats to national security have remained relatively constant. States struggle with their identities as old grievances emerge from the collapse of the Soviet Union, creating pockets of instability. There is no shortage of oppression, hunger, and inequity. Individuals and states are working feverishly to build capabilities they can use to coerce weaker, less capable states. The conditions of the new order have made the old challenges more complex, not necessarily new or vastly different. As long as the nation-state system is the norm for international order, the problems and solutions to those problems will remain in the realm of nation-state and coalition actions.¹²⁰ The dilemma of progress toward solving these problems does not necessarily require new ideas, or bold inventive

¹¹⁸ May, ed., 25-26.

¹¹⁹ Sands-Pignot, 33.

¹²⁰ Lindamood, 1.

strategies. The Cold War experience provides the perfect foundation for a focused yet flexible approach to the complex security issues within the international nation-state system. The basic precepts of containment strategy and the key elements through which it was ultimately executed is the solution to the problems of a global ideological threat.¹²¹

The Cold War was won with a balanced strategy of containment that emphasized diplomacy, economic might, strategic communication and development to win the ideological battle, as much as it was by intelligence and military might. The early US effort to defeat terrorism with military action sent a strong signal, and partially decapitated the highest profile terrorist organizations. However, the limits to this singular approach are now widely recognized and a new containment strategy and interagency process are required to guide the most informed efforts to win the GWOT. This new contemporary containment strategy recognizes that the essential ideological struggle can only succeed if the United States addresses the underlying conditions that terrorists seek to exploit, and wins the battle for trust, confidence and respect of moderate regional states. Such emphasis will create regional stability, preserve newly democratic states, and build legitimacy for those governments and the ideology of freedom and democracy. This approach must be applied now, during this time of change and recognition that the struggle against militant Islamic terrorism will require diplomatic and economic development programs, the support of partner nations, as well as the indispensable military dimension.¹²²

What is at stake is no more daunting and no less possible than the defeat of the previous ideology which threatened the core values of pluralist democracies, that of the Soviet communist system and the ideology it fed on. The Soviet communist empire collapsed not because its ideology became any mellower with age, communist dogma stayed as strident against capitalism until the very last gasp of its control over public information. Soviet communism fell because its citizens wanted out of a system which denied them the perceived advantages they saw in the West. They wanted a similar system that offered the means to attain personal satisfaction by ways

¹²¹ Ibid., 3.

unavailable and unattainable through their government's program. The ideology of capitalist democracy prevailed against the ideology of Soviet communism.

Turning this analysis to the way forward in combating radical Islamic movements which seek to overturn and destroy the existing world order, a rough analogy must be made between radical Islam and the way communism as an ideology was defeated. Soviet communism became superfluous and an inhibitor to the progressive development of the people who were forced to live under it. It will be in this same fashion that this latest struggle will be resolved; when those who are forced to live under the most pernicious aspects of radical militant Islamic fundamentalist rule realize that they have a choice not to do so.¹²³

This world-wide conflict is a struggle between ideas, whose competing visions of how society and humanity should exist are at stake. For much the same reasons the previous global struggles of the past 100 years were fought and won, the United States must fight and win this latest conflict which challenges its national interests and core values. This war between conflicting ideologies, one collectivist and controlled, the other individualist and liberal, must be won more through the superiority of ideals and visions for humanity than by the strength of military might alone. The end of the struggle will not be accomplished simply through the defeat of the movements and their leaders whose goal is the destruction of the United States and the establishment of an Islamic world order. Rather, it will be achieved when ideologies based on intolerance and violence are rejected by those they seek to represent and control, and are replaced by beliefs which encourage tolerance and peace.¹²⁴

The obvious answer to the problem posed by militant Islamic expansionism is to make the prospect of future aggression too costly to be worth undertaking. This of course is much easier said than done. Continued armed preparedness is and will remain an indispensable ingredient if not the only effective means in our dealings with the most violent militant Islamic

¹²² Butts and Reynolds, eds., 16.

¹²³ Sands-Pignot, 36.

¹²⁴ Ibid., 36-37.

actors. At the same time, we must begin to think of bolstering our defenses along the second front, call it the moral front, for want of a better name, which is where we can win the decisive ground, vulnerable world populations and nation-states, before ever needing to apply the military element of power. To meet the task confronting us we must employ our greatest efforts in the application of diplomatic, economic and informational realms. Only through ingenious application of all of our tools can we expect to contain the world revolutionary appetites of AQ and its militant Islamic partners; and hope that “time and change,” as Mr. Kennan put it, will eventually temper antagonisms.¹²⁵

Regardless of the differences between Soviet communism and militant Islam, it is imperative that the United States have a viable grand strategy for the new world order. Granted that grand strategies are bound by time and space, successful grand strategies also transcend time and space, or there would be little value in studying history. In developing a containment strategy to counter the expansion of the USSR and communism, Kennan relied on the principle of transferability, that grand strategies of the past could suggest what to emulate and what to avoid in shaping grand strategies for the future. The process is intuitive, involving the ability to see that a situation is like one or more that have existed in the past, and that it is worth knowing how the analogous cases were handled. It requires the self-confidence to be selective, the self-discipline to be clear, and a certain amount of self-dramatization to get one’s point across, not unlike Kennan’s long telegram.

It is indeed difficult, if not impossible to think of any grand strategy in which the results produced in the end corresponded more closely with the objectives specified at the beginning than with containment. By the end of the Cold War, the success of containment was clear. There was no catastrophic war with the Soviet Union, and there was no appeasement either. Inferring that containment was a successful strategy for its time, then it implies relevance beyond the context of time and space. It suggests that the strategy of containment serves as a guide for periods, places,

¹²⁵ Paul E. Zinner. “Ideological Bases of Soviet Foreign Policy, *World Politics* (July 1952): 507-

and circumstances yet to come. In this context, the likelihood that a modified strategy of containment would succeed in defeating militant Islam is high. This paper argues that a contemporary strategy of containment is not only viable for the current and future GWOT, but is necessary.

The costs for a contemporary containment strategy will not be small. As in the Cold War, it demands the likelihood of higher taxes, the strong possibility of government service to include conscription, federal intervention in the sciences, education, business and labor; impositions on travel, regulations on immigration, not to mention domestic surveillance will all be expensive and challenge constitutional rights of liberty.¹²⁶ However, in order to achieve some sort of lasting peace in the war against militant fundamentalist Islam, a comprehensive and long-term strategy that integrates national and international resources and agencies on a global scale is crucial. The United States must determine whether its strategy for this long term global fight is long term management or immediate victory. Traditional thinking is that victory, defined as the eradication of the global insurgency, is the appropriate goal. A management approach with a containment strategy has significant merit, particularly in view of the United State's ongoing commitments as the lone superpower to stability on a grand scale, and the resources and time required to achieve total victory in this environment. A containment strategy would distinguish between different nation-state situations and their ability to combat the militant Islamic insurgent threat, and commit the US military only to countering those insurgencies related to the support or sanctuary of international terrorism. The real strategic challenge is not the military battle against al-Qaeda and its subsidiaries, but the conditions that allow these groups to germinate in the first place. This view requires economic, diplomatic, information, and global cooperation extended to those states that are at risk and with the potential to move toward reform.

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¹²⁶ McDougal, 169.

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